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(*Pure as the Pines*)

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Suite 87H 81 Fulton St., New York

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HEALING
TAR SOAP
THE PACKER MANUF'G CO. NEW YORK

Send 10c for a sample half-cake.

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Last month we said "Soon."

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In this one Special Anniversary Fiction Number, on sale July 15th, there are

TWENTY BIG FEATURES

CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE

Prisoners of the Flood . . . . Jennie Parsons

My Memory of the Dayton Disaster. The story of a woman who was marooned for three days and nights in the middle of the flood district in Dayton — a great human experience the telling of which ranks as a journalistic masterpiece 39

ILLUSTRATIONS BY H. T. DUNN

The Woman in Marble . . . . Leonard Merrick

The story of an artist's model and of Bohemian life in Paris 49

ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. GRAHAM COOTES

CONTINUED ON PAGE FIVE

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Selling Jewels to Multimillionaires . . . . **Arthur Howard**
The author of "The Prodigal" begins a series of remarkable revelations concerning the Fifth Avenue jewelry business in New York, and the great millionaire families who form its patronage 57
ILLUSTRATIONS BY WILL GREFÉ

Two on a Mountain . . . . **Edith Ronald Mirrielees**
The story of a man and woman placed in an unusual situation —a story of primitive emotion and feminine diplomacy 66
ILLUSTRATIONS BY P. V. E. IVORY

The After House . . . . **Mary Roberts Rinehart**
The thrilling second installment of the best detective story of recent years 73
ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAY WILSON PRESTON

The Camel of Han . . . . **Samuel Merwin**
Another adventure in the Charmed Life of Miss Austin 85
ILLUSTRATIONS BY R. M. CROSBY

The Puzzle of the Under-World . . . . **George Kibbe Turner**
The second of Mr. Turner's articles about the New York police, in which he takes up the social status of the Idle Boy 99
DRAWINGS BY LOUIS FANCHER

Three of Us . . . . **John Fleming Wilson**
A story that will not soon be forgotten 113
ILLUSTRATION BY WALLACE MORGAN

The Autobiography of an American Jew . . . . . . **Abraham Cahan**
The Rise of David Levinsky 116
ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAY HAMBIDGE

The Open Circle . . . . **Maravene Kennedy Thompson**
A Peggy story 129
ILLUSTRATION BY CLARENCE F. UNDERWOOD

The Purple Wig . . . . **Gilbert K. Chesterton**
Father Brown reappears in a fascinating mystery 136
ILLUSTRATIONS BY WILLIAM HATHERELL, R. I.

The Empty Saddle . . . . **Donal Hamilton Haines**
ILLUSTRATIONS BY C. F. PETERS
152

The Montessori Movement . . . . **Ellen Yale Stevens**
170

The Home-Coming of Clement Albricht . . . . . . **Octavia Roberts**
The story of a woman who sets out to face the world alone 177
ILLUSTRATIONS BY CYRUS FOSMIRE

Books of the Day . . . . **Gardner W. Wood**
199

COVER DESIGNED BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON

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YOUR MANUFACTURER

> Whatever we wish to buy, we ought first consider not only if the thing be fit for us, but if the manufacture of it be a wholesome and happy one; and if, on the whole, the sum we are going to spend will do as much good spent in this way as it would if spent in some other way.
>
> —*Ruskin.*

Most every one's income is spent in buying—only a few can save—for the great majority have to put back into circulation the money they take out.

What are you getting for your dollar?

Are you selecting the goods of the wholesome manufacturer when you buy?

Are you getting the guarantee on uniformity, service, quality and price?

These are the important questions in these high cost of living days.

Advertising secures the consumer's confidence—by honest methods; enlarges distribution—assures the dealer's coöperation—increases the productiveness automatically—and by reducing the cost of manufacturing thru the quantity of business lays the best goods at your door at a lower cost than the brand of the unknown manufacturer whose quality is invariably determined by the price he can get.

The only manufacturer who cannot afford to advertise is the man who has a poor product to sell.

McClure's Magazine places before you a selected list of only the best manufacturers. Compare the goods of McClure's manufacturer against the kind which the Cut Price Dealer says are just as good.

Walter H. Manning

Advertising Director

Guide to the "Marketplace of the World"

Automobiles, Motor Boats, and Accessories

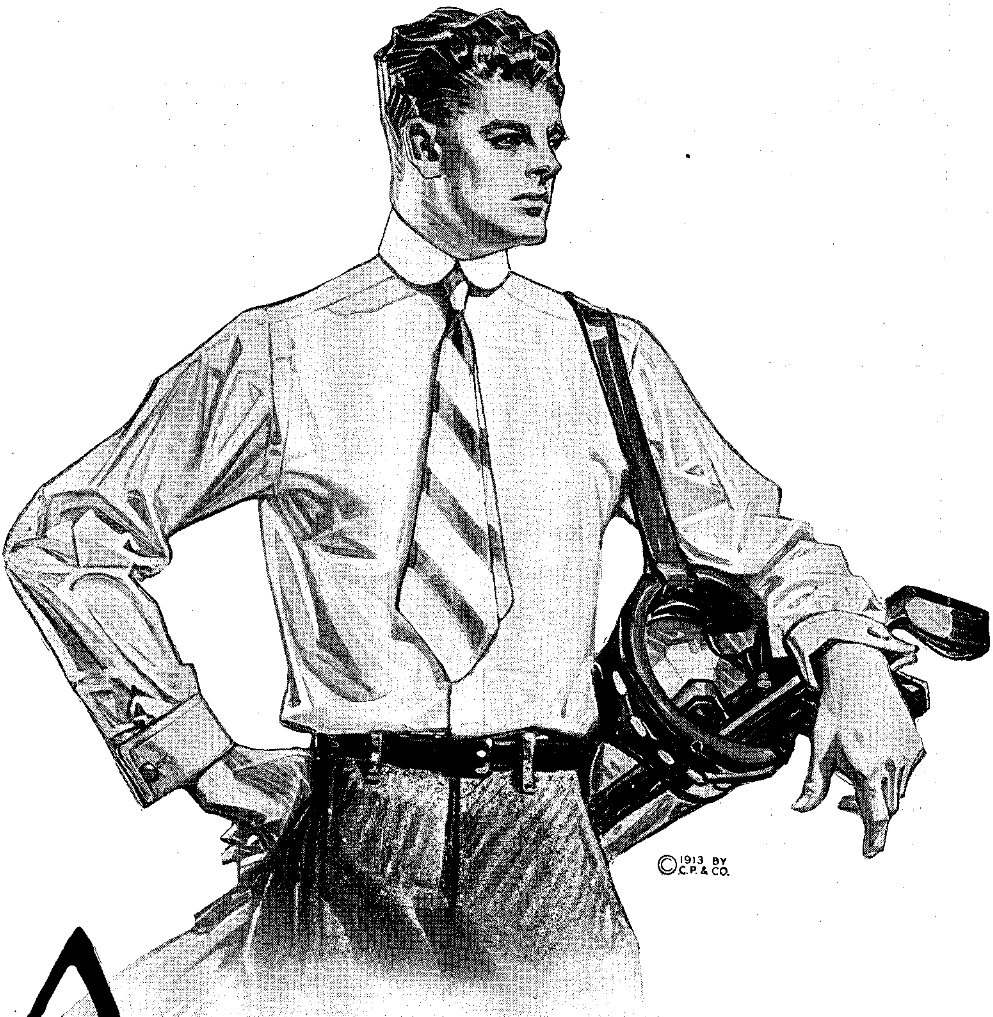
Edwards Mfg. Co., The 194
Goodrich, B. F., Co., The 205
Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. 206-207
Jackson Automobile Co. 163
Justice, A. R., Co. 173
Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. 176
Michigan Steel Boat Co. 189

Automobiles, Motor Boats and Accessories—*Continued.*

Texas Company, The 175
Vacuum Oil Co. 9

Banking and Financial

Calvert Mortgage Co. 35
N. Y. Real Estate & Security Co. 35
Pioneer Trust & Savings Bank 35
Straus, S. W. & Co. 34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ARROW
COLLARS & SHIRTS

The new "Norfolk" is both smart and comfortable. It has the graceful cut-away low front, ample cravat slipway and sufficient height in the back to show a bit of white above the coat collar. *U. S., 2 for 25c: Canada, 3 for 50c.*

The newest Arrow Tunic Shirts for summer show the "Henley" cuffs, which, being reversible, double the life of the shirt.

$1.50 up.

Send for the new style books

CLUETT, PEABODY & CO., INC., Troy, N. Y., *Makers*

Building and Construction

Barrett Mfg. Co.—Specification Roofs	154
Cabot, Samuel—Shingle Stains	181
General Fireproofing Co.	148
Heppes Company, The	182
Mershon & Morley Co.	189
Mott, J. L., Iron Works	198
New Jersey Zinc Co., The	182
Rider-Ericsson Engine Co.	179
Standard Sanitary Mfg. Co.	203
Tarvia	204
Truscon Laboratories	180
Trussed Concrete Steel Co.	185

Cameras and Optical Goods

Bausch & Lomb Optical Co.	181
Eastman Kodak Co.	153–197
Folmer & Schwing Division	169
Gennert, G.	186
Rochester Optical Division	172

Educational

American Schools' Assn.	32
Columbian Corres. College	35
Dickson Memory School	192
Home Correspondence School	32
Illinois College of Photography	21
International Correspondence School	196
Language-Phone Method	32
National Press Assn.	180
National Salesmen Training Association	173
Page-Davis School	35
Reed School, The	32
Von Boeckman, Paul	192

Residential

Co-Educational Schools	22–23–32
Foreign Schools	31
Schools for Boys	24–25–26–27–28–29–30–31–32
Schools for Girls	12–13–14–15–16–17–18–19–20–21
Special Schools	21–22

Food Products

Anheuser-Busch Brewing Co.—Malt Nutrine	200
Cream of Wheat Co.	208
Grape-Nuts	151
National Biscuit Co.	171
Post Toasties	149
Shredded Wheat Co.	3d cover

For the Home

Bon Ami	143
Dorsey Mfg. Co.	184
Glidden Varnish Co.	195
White Mountain Freezer Co.	193

Heating and Lighting Systems

Peck-Williamson Underfeed Furnace Co.	185
Pierce, Butler & Pierce Mfg. Co.	193

Jewelry and Silverware

Gorham Co., The	36
International Silver Co.	179
Loftis Bros. & Co.	168
Tiffany & Co.	1
Waltham Watch Co.	165

Miscellaneous

Ætna Accident and Liability Co.	201
American Radio-Thor-X. Co.	33
American Telephone & Telegraph Co.	159
Barnes, W. F. & John, Co.	178
Brinkler, G. H.	195
General Electric Co.	162
Helmet Gum Factory	35
Iowa Bird Co.	184
Munn & Co.	192
Munter, Prof. Chas.	189
Pedicure Co., The	194
Perfect Sales Co.	184
Scholl Mfg. Co.	194
Waterman, L. E., Co.	157

Musical Instruments, etc.

Church, John, Co.—"The Everett Piano"	161
Columbia Graphophone Co.	4
Emerson Pianos	173
Victor Talking Machine Co.	146–147

Office Equipment

American Writing Machine Co.	184
Bennett Typewriter Co.	178
Daus Duplicator Co.	173
Oliver Typewriter Co.	167
Pittsburgh Visible Typewriter Co.	163
Typewriter Distributing Co.	194
Typewriter Emporium	192
Waterman, L. E., Co.	157

Publishers

Encyclopaedia Britannica	10–11
Puritan Pub. Co.	180

Sporting Goods

Mead Cycle Co.	178
Palmer, I. E., Co.—Hammocks	180
Peace Dale Co-operative Stores	178
Resisto Luggage Co.	161

Toilet Articles

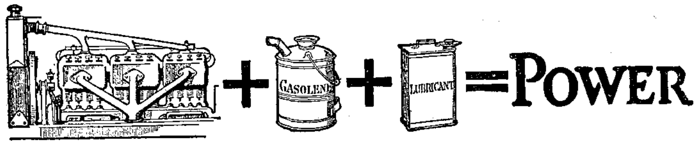
Bauer & Black	186
Colgate's Talc Powder	4th cover
Fairbank Co., N. K.	191
Florence Mfg. Co.—Prophylactic Tooth Brush	189
Ivory Soap	38
Kirk, James S., & Co.	158
Lablache Face Powder	184
Packer's Tar Soap	2
Pears' Soap	2d cover
Potter Drug & Chemical Co.—Cuticura Soap	155
Williams, J. B., Co.—Talcum Powder	202

Travel

Bowring & Co.	173
Chamber of Commerce	173
Clark, Frank C.	173
Rock Island Road	166
Where-To-Go-Bureau	188–189

Wearing Apparel

Adler, L., Bros. & Co.	179
B. V. D. Co., The	160
Cluett, Peabody & Co.	7
Edgarton, C. A., Mfg. Co.	158
Frost, Geo., Co.	168
Head, Clarence E.	178
Putnam Boot & Shoe Co.	192



The power of your automobile is simply the sum of your *motor-efficiency* plus your *fuel-efficiency* plus the *efficiency of your lubricant.*

Today most automobile *motors* are well designed. You are offered little choice in *gasoline.* But *lubricating oils* differ widely both in quality and in "body."

Despite this, motorists often select their lubricating oil with an indifference that is little short of reckless.

The penalty is paid in a multiplicity of motor troubles.

Only oil of the highest lubricating qualities can properly protect the moving parts.

Only oil whose "body," or thickness, is suited to your feed system can properly feed to the friction points.

Only oil that combines these qualities can give your car:—

(1) The greatest horse-power efficiency.

(2) The smoothest operation.

(3) The fewest repair troubles.

(4) The lowest operating cost.

(5) The longest life.

(6) The greatest second-hand value.

We have undertaken this serious problem with the thoroughness that has established our standing in the general lubricating field.

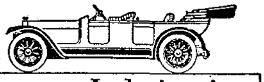
Each year we make a careful motor-analysis of each of the season's models. Based on these analyses and on practical experience, we specify, in a lubricating chart (printed in part on this page), the grade of Gargoyle Mobiloil that is most efficient for each make of car.

If you are not interested in correct "body," there still remains the best of reasons for using Gargoyle Mobiloils.

In sheer lubricating quality they stand alone.

But you will make a serious mistake if you do not note down, from the chart, the grade whose "body" is best suited to your motor.

A booklet, containing our complete lubricating chart and points on lubrication, will be mailed on request.



Correct Lubrication

SMOOTHEST OPERATION | MOST POWER | FEWEST REPAIRS | LONGEST LIFE

Explanation: In the schedule, the letter opposite the car indicates the grade of Gargoyle Mobiloil that should be used. For example: "A" means "Gargoyle Mobiloil A." "Arc." means "Gargoyle Mobiloil Arctic." For all electric vehicles use Gargoyle Mobiloil A. The recommendations cover both pleasure and commercial vehicles unless otherwise noted.

MODEL OF	1909		1910		1911		1912		1913	
CARS	Summer	Winter	Summer	Winter	Summer	Winter	Summer	Winter	Summer	Winter
Abbott Detroit			A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Alco	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
American	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Apperson	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Autocar (2 cyl.)	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
" (4 cyl.)	A	E	A	E	A	Arc.	A	Arc.		
Avery			A	E	A	E	A	A	A	A
Benz	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Buick (2 cyl.)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
" (4 cyl.)	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Cadillac (1 cyl.)	B	A								
" (4 cyl.)	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Cartercar	A	A	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E
" Com'l	A	A	A	E	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Case					A	A	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Chalmers	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Chase	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Cole			Arc.	Arc.	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Columbia	A	E	E	E	A	A	A	A		
" "Knight"							A	A	A	A
Couple Gear	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Daimler	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	A	A	A
" "Knight"					A	A	A	A	A	A
Darracq	A	E	A	E	A	E	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
De Dion	B	A	B	E	B	A	B	A	B	A
Delaunay-Belleville	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Elmore	A	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.		
E. M. F.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.		
Fiat	B	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	B	A
Flanders			E	E	E	E	Arc.	Arc.		
" (6 cyl.)									Arc.	Arc.
Ford	E	E	A	Arc.	E	E	E	E	E	E
Franklin	B	E	B	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
" Com'l	B	A	B	A	B	A	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
G. M. C.							Arc.	Arc.	A	Arc.
Gramm					A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Gramm-Logan	A	Arc.	A	Arc.						
Herreshoff	A	A	Arc.	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Hewitt (2 cyl.)	A	A	A	A	A	Arc.				
" (4 cyl.)	A	E	A	E	A	Arc.	E	E	E	E
Hudson			Arc.	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Hupmobile "20"	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
" "32"									A	Arc.
I. H. C. (air)									B	A
" (water)									A	A
International	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	A		
Interstate	A	E	A	E	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Isotta	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Itala	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Jackson (2 cyl.)	A	A	A	A						
" (4 cyl.)	A	E	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Kelly					Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.		
Kelly Springfield									Arc.	Arc.
Kissel-Kar	A	E	A	E	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
" " Com'l					Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Kline Kar			Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Knox	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Krit			A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Lancia	B	A	B	A	B	Arc.	B	Arc.	B	Arc.
Locomobile	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Lozier	A	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Mack	A	E	A	E	A	E	E	E	E	E
Marion	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Marmon	Arc.	Arc.	A	E	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Matheson	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	A	A	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Maxwell (2 cyl.)	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E		
" (4 cyl.)	E	E	E	E	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
" (6 cyl.)									Arc.	Arc.
Mercedes	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E
" "Knight"					A	A	A	A	A	A
Mercer			A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Michigan			Arc.	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Minerva "Knight"					A	A	A	A	A	A
Mitchell	A	A	Arc.	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Moon	A	E	A	E	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
National	A	Arc.	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Oakland	A	E	A	E	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Oldsmobile	A	E	A	E	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Overland	A	E	A	E	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Packard	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Paige-Detroit			E	E	A	Arc.	A	E	A	E
Panhard	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
" "Knight"					A	A	A	A	A	A
Pathfinder									A	Arc.
Peerless	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Pierce Arrow	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
" " Com'l					Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Pope Hartford	A	E	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Premier	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Pullman	A	E	A	E	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Rambler	A	A	A	A	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Rapid	A	A	A	A	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.		
Rayfield							A	A	A	A
Regal	A	E	A	E	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Renault	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Reo	A	A	A	E	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
S. G. V.					B	Arc.	B	Arc.	B	Arc.
Selden	A	E	A	E	A	E	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Service					A	A	A	Arc.	A	Arc.
Simplex	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Speedwell	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
" "Mead"									A	Arc.
Stanley	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Stearns	A	A	Arc.	Arc.	A	Arc.	A	Arc.		
" "Knight"							A	A	A	A
Stevens Duryea	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Stoddard-Dayton	E	E	Arc.	Arc.	A	A	A	A	A	A
" " "Knight"							A	A	A	A
Studebaker	A	E	E	E	A	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	A	Arc.
Stutz							Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Thomas	E	E	E	E	E	E	A	E		
Walter	A	E	A	E	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
Warren Detroit			Arc.	Arc.	A	A	A	A	A	Arc.
White (Gas)			Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.
" (Steam)	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Winton	E	E	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.	Arc.

GARGOYLE

Mobiloil

A grade for each type of motor

The various grades, refined and filtered to remove free carbon, are:

Gargoyle Mobiloil "A"
Gargoyle Mobiloil "B"
Gargoyle Mobiloil "D"
Gargoyle Mobiloil "E"
Gargoyle Mobiloil "Arctic"

They are put up in 1 and 5 gallon ***sealed cans,*** in half-barrels, and barrels. ***All are branded with the Gargoyle, which is our mark of manufacture.*** They can be secured from all reliable garages, automobile supply stores, and others who supply lubricants.

VACUUM OIL CO., Rochester, U. S. A.

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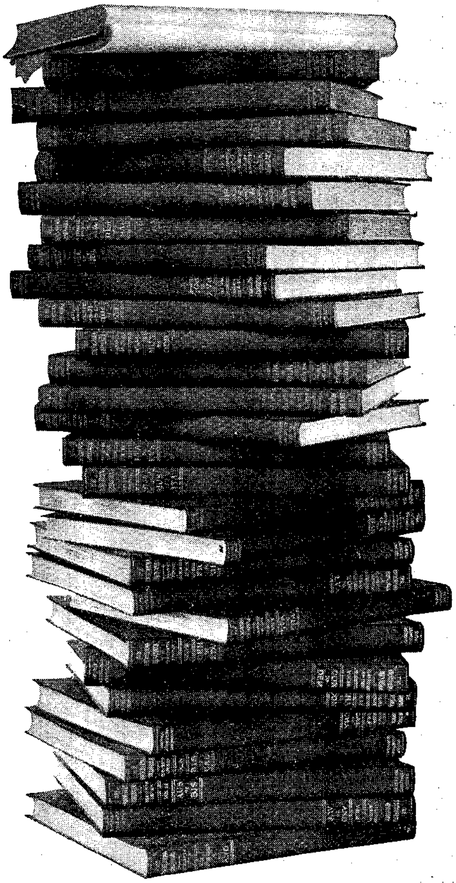

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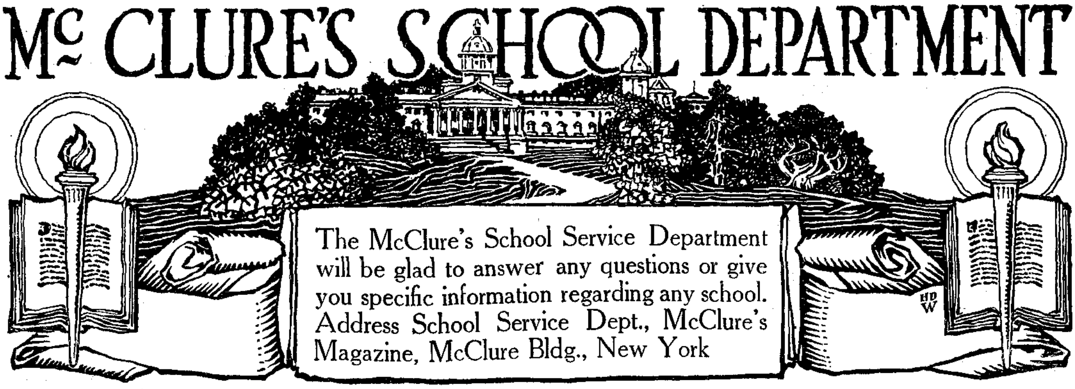

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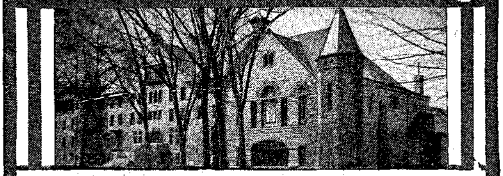

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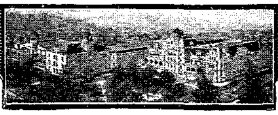

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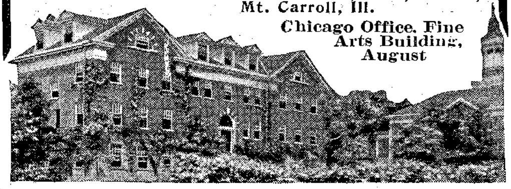

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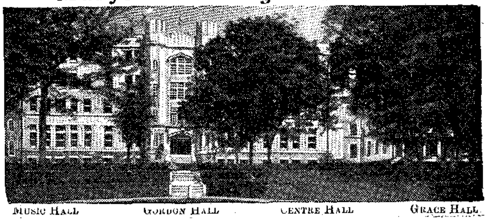

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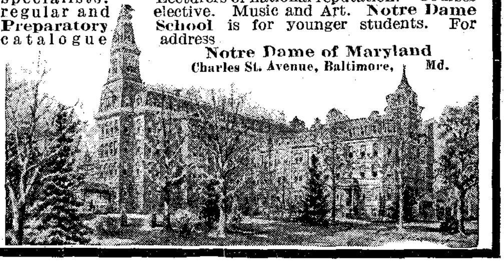

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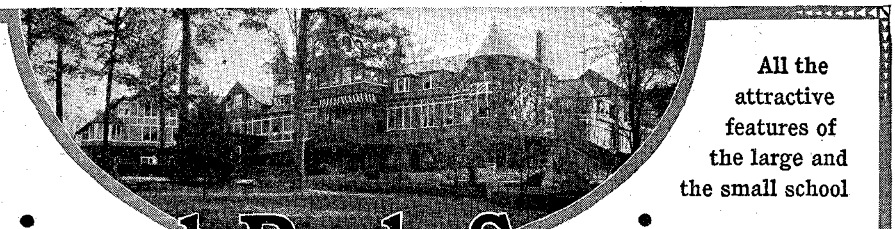

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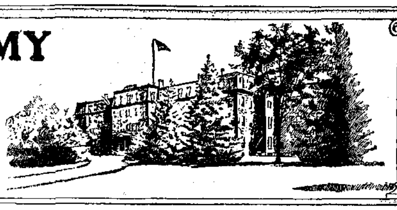

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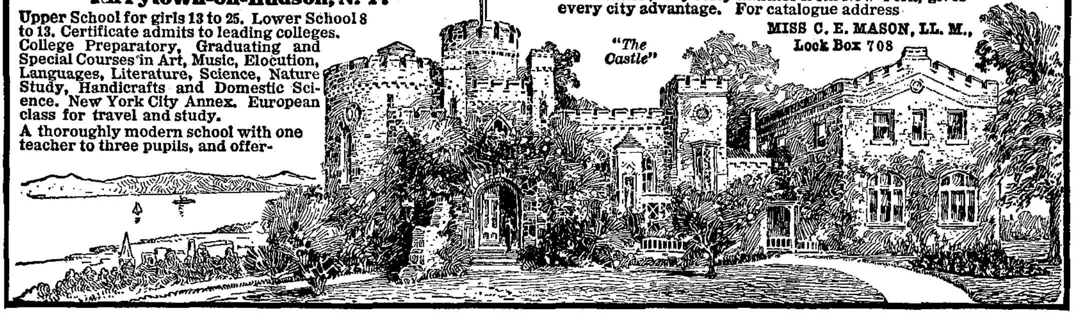

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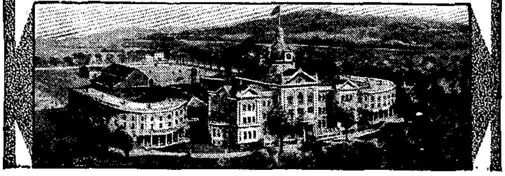

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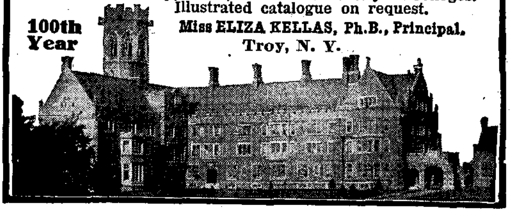

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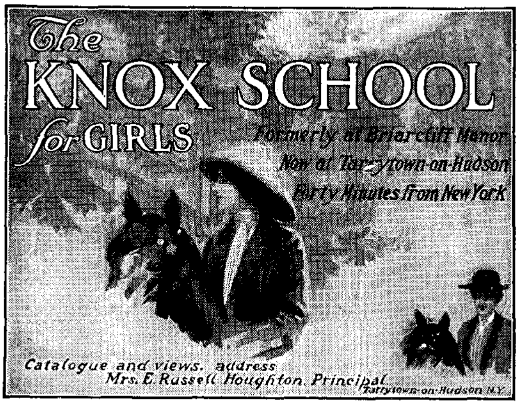

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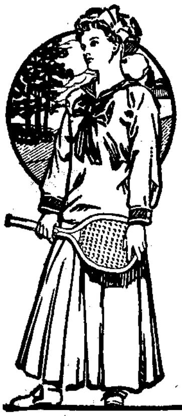

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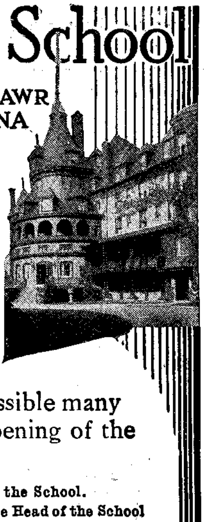

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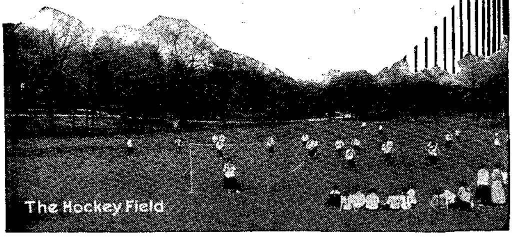

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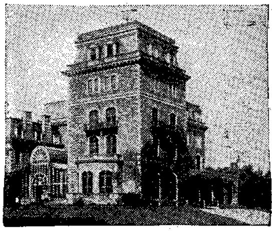

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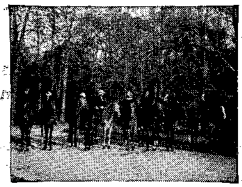

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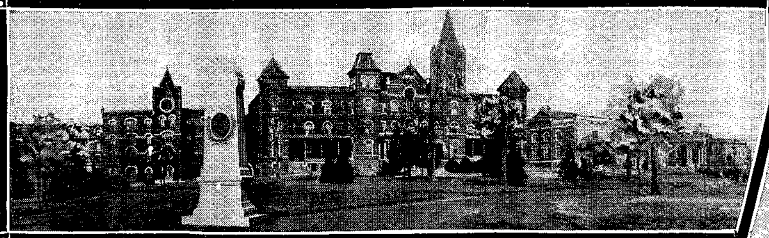

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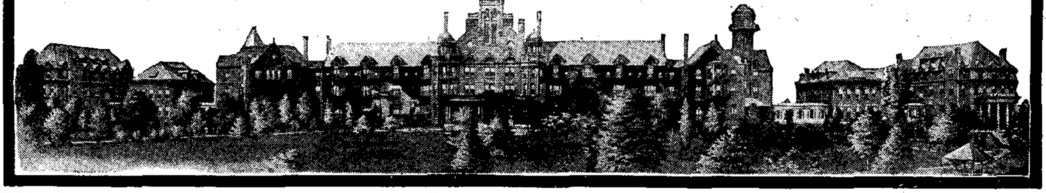

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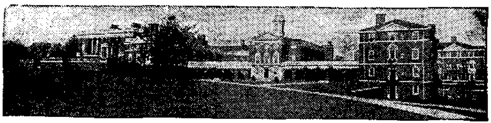

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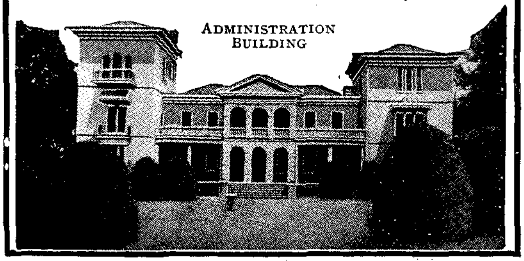

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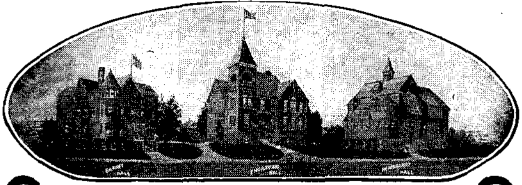

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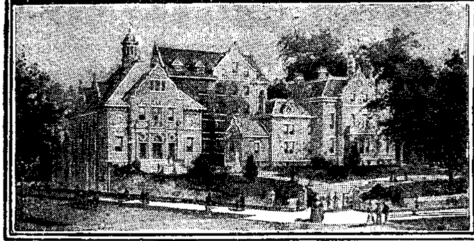

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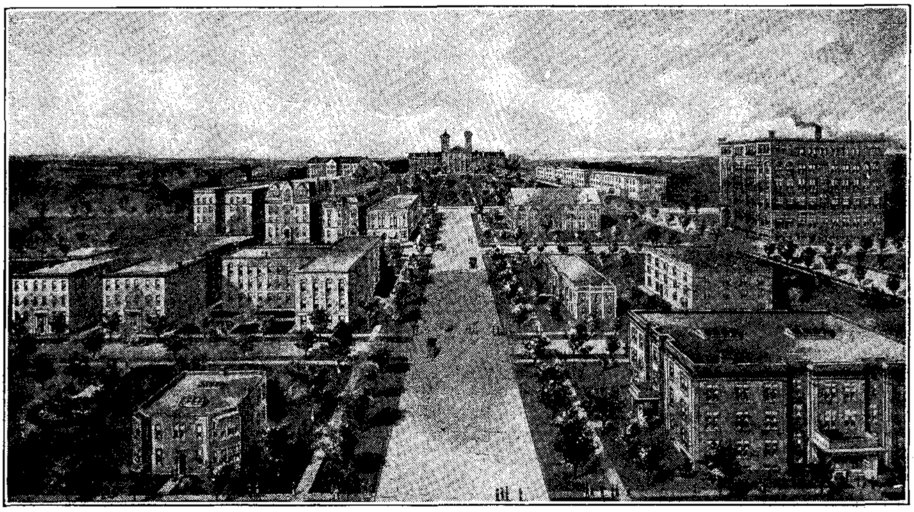

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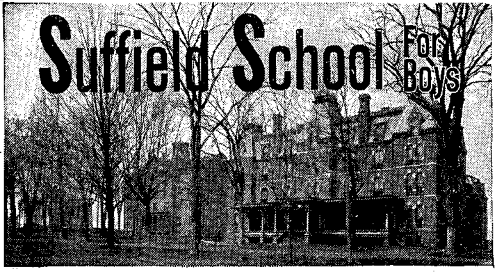

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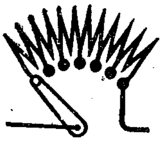

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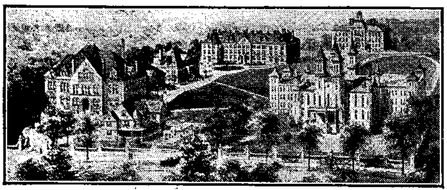
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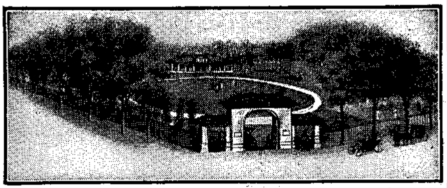
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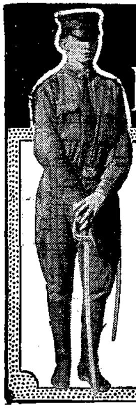

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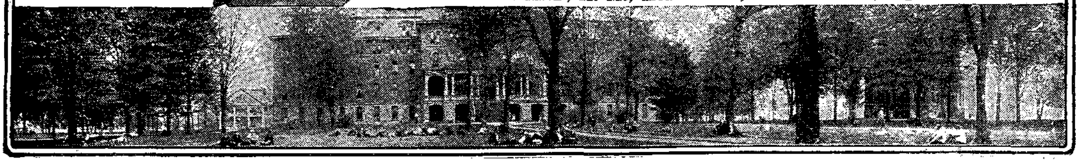

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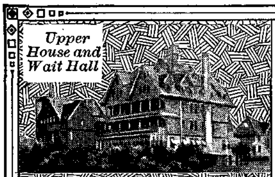

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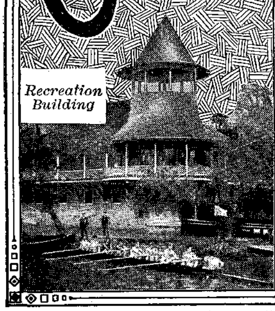

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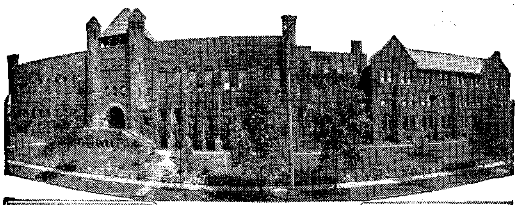

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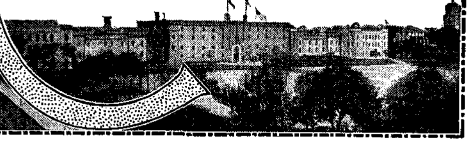

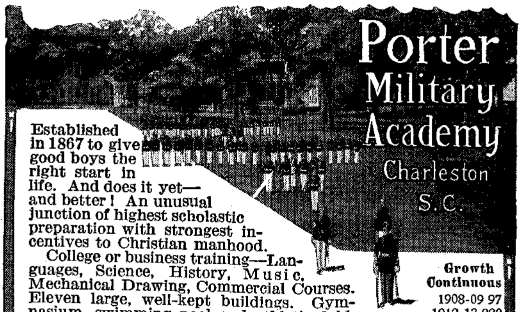

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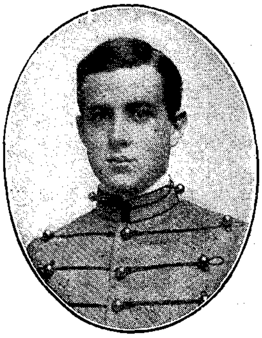

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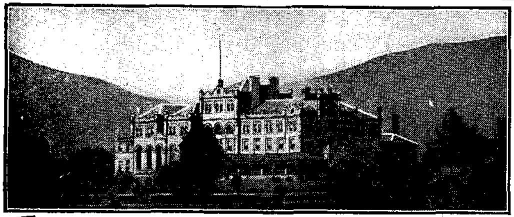

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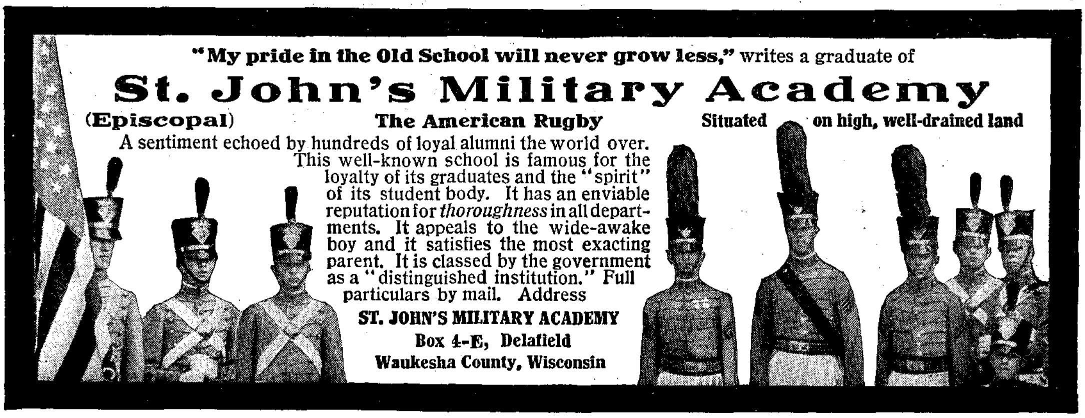

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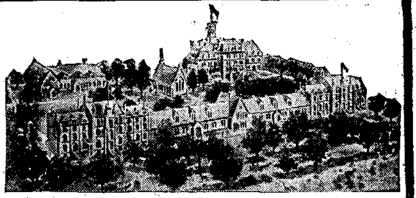

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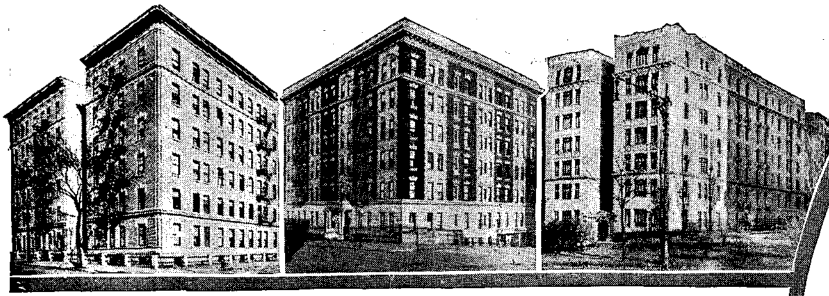

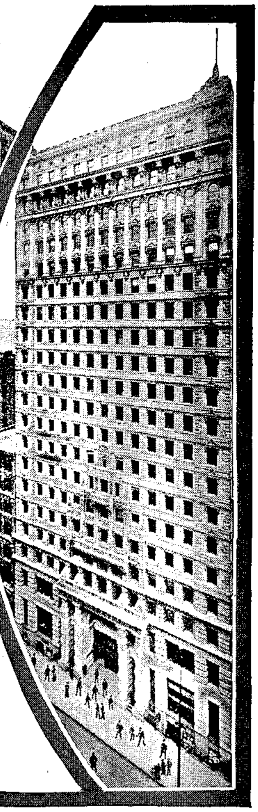

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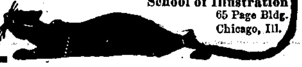

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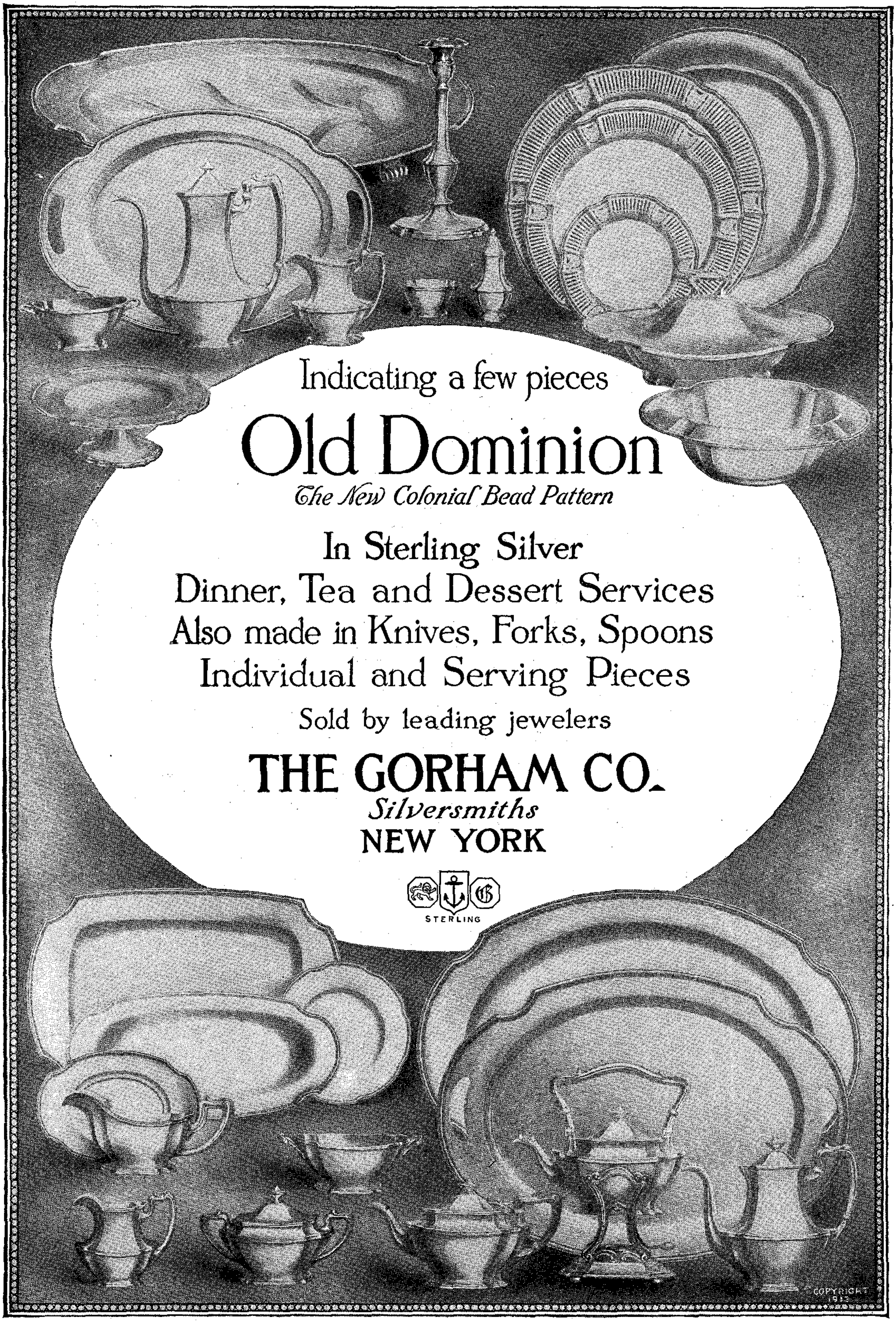

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JULY—1913

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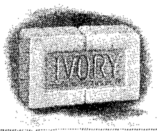

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PRISONERS OF THE FLOOD

My Memory of the Dayton Disaster

BY

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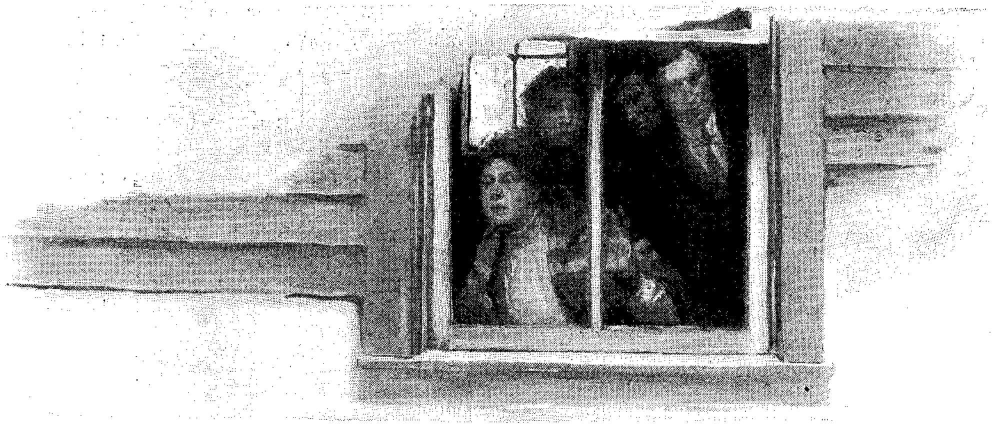
ILLUSTRATIONS BY H. T. DUNN



IN a room in the second story of a brick house, two women, six men, and two children were marooned for three days and nights during the Dayton flood. One of these women has written the story of those three days for McCLURE'S MAGAZINE. In its simple, direct telling of a great experience the story ranks as a journalistic masterpiece. It is as the expression of a great human experience, rather than as a record of the Dayton disaster, that this story is published.

THE whistles kept blowing and blowing. We couldn't understand it. At last I got up and went to the front window. It was a little after six o'clock, still kind of gray.

"Oh, Jack," I said, "come here. Am I crazy, or what?"

The whole street was full of running water — nasty yellow water. And men were walking around in it, almost up to the tops of their high rubber boots.

All the week before, it had rained, sometimes in regular cloud-bursts. And South Jefferson Street, where we had taken rooms while we were in Dayton, was on very low ground.

"I'm going down to the contract," said Jack, "to see that everything is all right."

So Jack went off, in rubber boots, keeping close to the fences. And I was left alone with the two children.

I noticed the water kept rising. And finally

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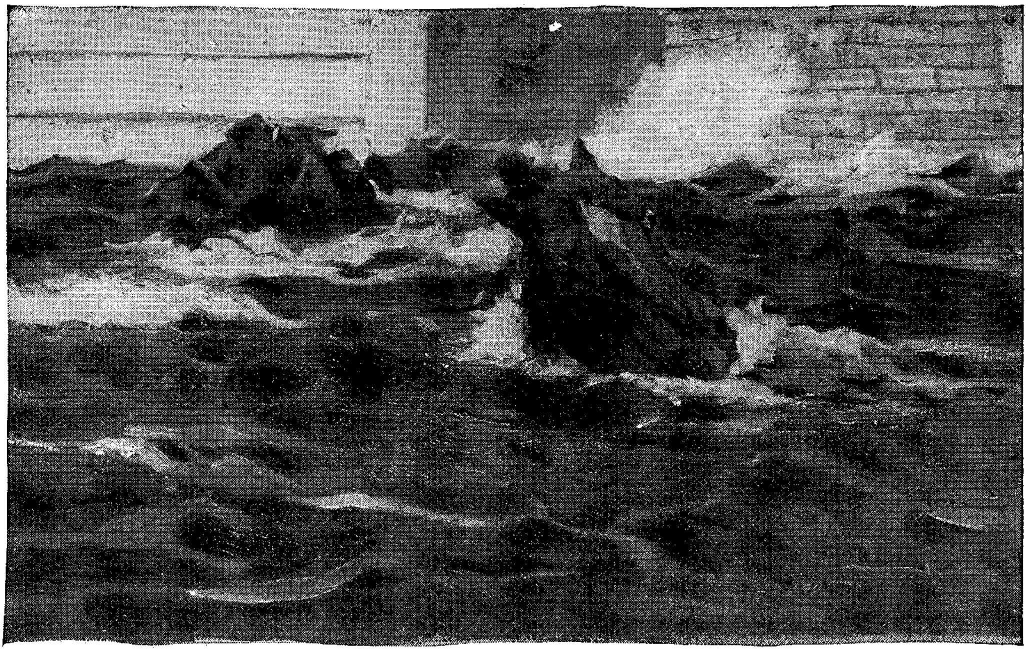


Mrs. Rawlins, the woman next door above us, called out to me:

"They say the reservoir at Shiloh's gone."

"I don't see how such stories get started," I said; "do you?"

"No," she said. "But if I were you I'd send up and get some bread, anyway."

There were half a dozen milk and bread carts lined up where South Jefferson Street rose to cross the railroad tracks.

So I sent Marion up to get some bread. The lawns were higher than the streets, and she got there by way of the lawns, climbing over the fences. She came back with two loaves of bread, the last the man had.

Then Mr. Shoyer and his wife,—"Mother Shoyer," we called her,— the people we rented our rooms from, came wading back. They had shut up their store, and on the way home had stopped at the meat market and bought a ham and two dozen eggs.

"Let's rip up the rugs," said Mother Shoyer, "and take what we can upstairs."

We saved what we could in the next few minutes, and then suddenly we stopped.

"The Levee Is Gone"

At half past eight there was a big yelling up the street, and — crack! I looked up. On the edge of the canal, about a hundred yards away, was a kind of high old shed, like a bandstand; they used to keep the canal mules there in the old days. I saw that go crumpling down, and the water come rolling by — in waves, high waves, like rough weather on the ocean. And everybody was yelling:

"The levee is gone!"

The water came down our street in a regular river. And everywhere it was full of whirlpools. It took those big horses and wagons from the track, and whirled them round and round; and, quicker than I can tell you about it, they were gone by.

But I was thinking of Jack.

"He can't get here now," said Mother Shoyer; "that's sure."

But I looked up the street; and there was Jack coming, hanging on to the top of the fences.

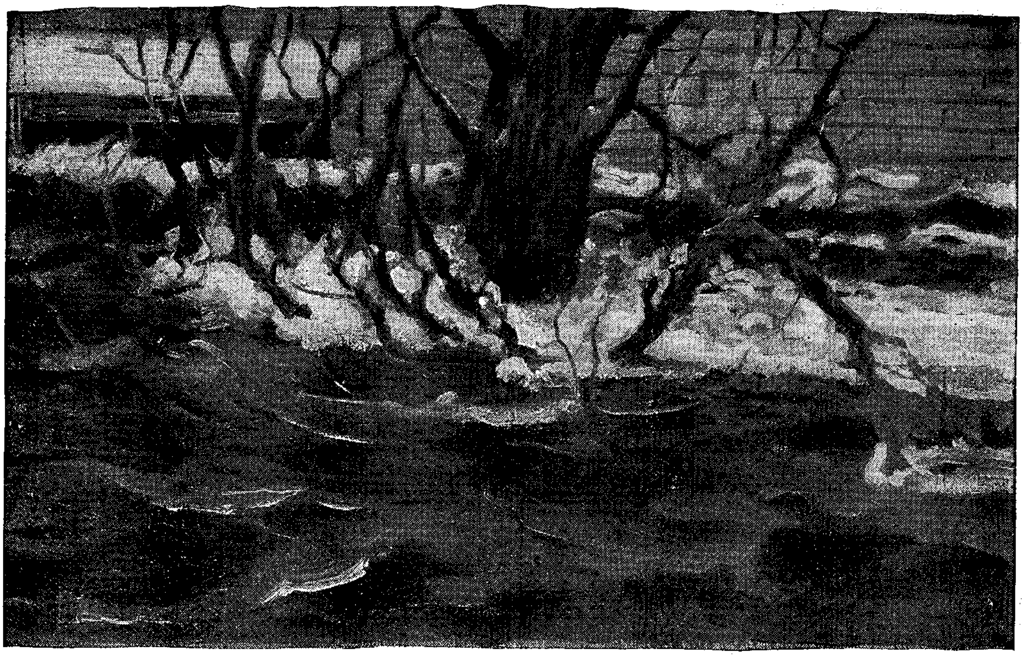
"Cheer up, Kid!" he called, waving his hand. "I'll be there."

So finally he reached us, though I thought he never would. And then we carried some more stuff upstairs.

Mother Shoyer had a new pianola, that had cost her nine hundred and fifty dollars, and she began to cry about it. So the men lifted it up and set it on two tables. (There were Jack, and Mr. Shoyer, and Earl Shoyer and "Frostie"— two boys about eighteen years old — and Mr. Collopy, a roomer.)

"There, that will be high enough," they said.

Then I remembered I had some eggs and bread and coffee in the kitchen, and went back after them. There was a big trap-door in the middle of the kitchen floor, that opened down into the cellar; and just as I stepped into the kitchen — bang! the bolt flew up against the



wall, and water came right up in a solid mass, and struck the ceiling.

I ran as fast as I could, but the water was up to my knees before I got to the stairway. So we had to stay with the Shoyers upstairs.

The Dummies and the Drowning Man

The water went by down the street, carrying all kinds of stuff. It had risen into the business district up above us by now, and things began to come down out of the store windows. First there were all kinds of tinware and pots and kettles from the Banner Store; they came down, spinning and spinning around in circles in the little whirlpools. Then the Harvard Clothing Store window went, and the dummies came floating by — wax figures in men's suits, fine wax figures with hair, and some of them with mustaches. They looked weird — just like people. And then the grocery stores went, and boxes and barrels of food came by. So Jack and Mr. Shoyer went to the front door and began fishing for stuff with a clothes-pole. Most of it got away from them, but they got a splendid barrel of apples, and Jack was calling upstairs about it, when Mr. Shoyer said:

"Say, Jack, look there — that's a man."

It was right in front of the house below.

"Man nothing," said Jack. "It's one of those dummies."

And just then a man's arm came up, over hand, in one of those new swimming strokes, and his head came out of the water — a young fellow, with his face perfectly white and his eyes bulging out from his cheeks. Then he went under twice.

"My God!" said Jack. "It is a man. I'm going out after him."

But I screamed, and Mr. Shoyer grabbed him and held him back. And Mr. Shoyer said:

"Hold on, Jack, they're going to get him next door." And they did.

They got him into their parlor, and he stood there with the water up to his waist. And then the people next door began saying to him:

"I don't see how we can keep you here, we've got such a lot of people in the house now."

"Excuse me!" said the fellow. "I'm not asking you for shelter; all I ask you is to let me rest till I get my strength, and then I'll go on."

So after a while he took off his coat and stepped out on the window-sill and looked at the water. Then he shivered, and said:

"Oh, I can't go into that again!"

The water was just like ice-water.

"You come over here, Mr. Man," said Jack.

So he reached out his hand (the houses were close together there), and Mr. Collopy grabbed Jack's hand, and Jack waded out and grabbed the man's, and they pulled him across. And just as soon as he got into the hall, he fell unconscious.

We put a little whisky through his teeth, and by and by he came to. His first words were:

"I can't get to her now!" And then he saw us around him, and said:

"All I ask you to do is to wrap me up in something, and let me lie down and rest."

He was shivering all over.

So we wrapped him up in all the blankets we had, and he lay down on the floor in the front room, and went right to sleep. And we went on looking out the window.

The Horses and the Rats

Just then the big planks began to come. They hit the house with an awful thump, going like a mill-race. There was a big, heavy lamp-post in front of the house, and I saw one of those planks come down against it, and in a second that big iron post doubled over like a wet weed.

Then furniture came down from the furniture stores, and pianos — the pianos bobbing along, all of them leaning a little bit forward. They came from the Aeolian Store, mostly. A friend of mine saw them start. The big plate-glass window broke, she said, and they came out, one by one, as if they were going out on parade.

And after that came horses from the livery stables. They came down one after another, and the water took them and whirled them round and round like chips.

Poor fellows! they didn't understand it at all. They whinnied and made a queer noise, a sort of half cry and half snort — an awful sound that went right through you. And their lips were all curled away up over their noses, with all their teeth showing.

"They are all in when they do that," said Mr. Collopy.

But the funniest thing was the rats. They came sailing down on soap-boxes and things — sitting up just like squirrels, looking around for a place to jump off.

"I don't care if they are rats, Jack," I said; "I wish they could be saved."

The Swimmer and the Baby

But then there was something else — awful. Half a block away, where the water turned in by the railroad track, all of a sudden a man came along with the current, swimming, and holding up a little baby. And just as he was turning the corner into our street, his foot caught in a wire or something, and he went down. The current dragged him under.

He struggled a while, and when he got loose again the baby was gone. The man swam around and around two or three times, and looked. And then he shook his head and swam in toward the houses, and they got him at a boarding-house at the corner. But the baby never came up.

It seemed to me I never knew a week so long as that morning. The men all went out on the south side of the house, where an eddy had formed, and fished for stuff. There was everything you could think of there — even a live horse for a while.

They fished out a big bag of potatoes, and a box of outing-flannel shirts, and a dummy from

the clothing store; but most of the stuff was furniture — they got half a dozen fine tables.

All of them got soaking wet climbing around on the boards and things, and Jack didn't have any change of clothes.

"What do you want me to do?" he said. "Sit and watch that thing go by? I'd go crazy!"

It was worse with Mr. Shoyer. His store was just up the street, and he knew he was losing everything he owned.

The weather was getting colder, and there was no way to make a fire upstairs. And pretty soon my wet skirts began to freeze. There wasn't any drinking water, either; it stopped running about ten o'clock, and you couldn't think of drinking that flood water.

"The Guy that Lost His Wife"

Finally it came noon, and everybody was terribly hungry.

"I've got a box of sardines left over from Sunday night," said Mother Shoyer.

So we ate those, and a little bread. I took one sardine myself. I knew we'd have to be saving. The rest of them filled up from that barrel of apples. But I wouldn't eat them; they'd been in that filthy water.

Pretty soon the man who'd been saved woke. He was sweating terribly, but he was better.

"All we've got to offer you," said Mother Shoyer, "is two sardines and a piece of bread."

"Oh, that's all right," said the man. He was a very pleasant fellow.

So then he told us about himself. He had been married only three months; and when the flood came he was up at the shoe store where he worked, and his wife was alone in their house. So he started to swim home to her. It was about a quarter of a mile.

He said he could have done it all right, only the water was so cold it took all the strength out of him; and when he struck that cross-current in the canal below our house, he had to give up and come back. But he was terribly worried about his wife.

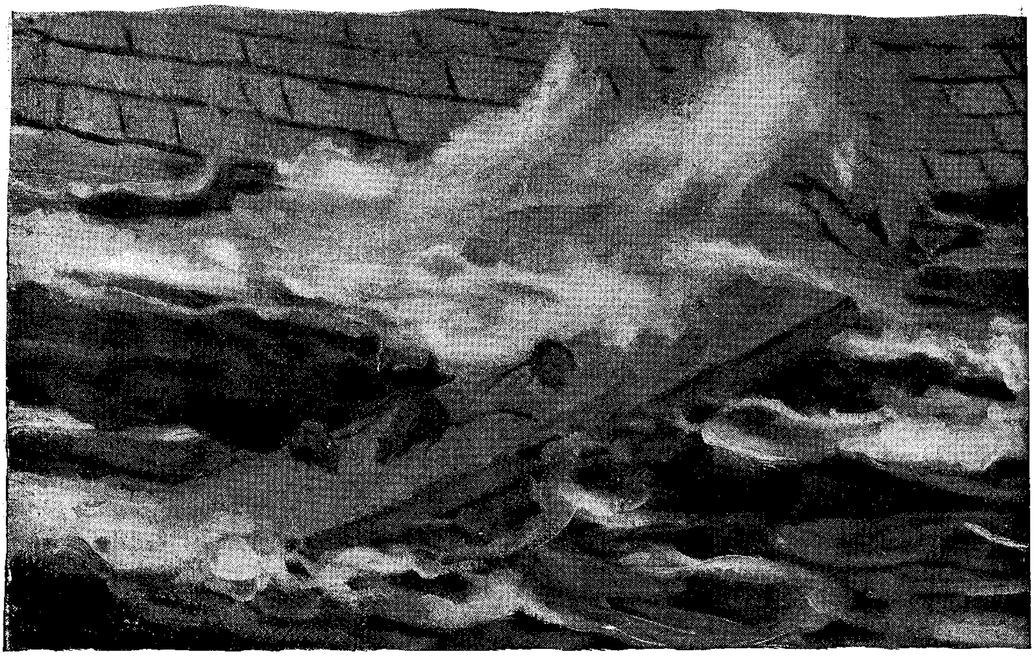
It's funny, but I don't remember that man's name at all. He told it to us too, but I suppose we were too excited to remember. And whenever Jack spoke of him he called him "the guy that lost his wife"; so that's the way I remember him.

"If We Go Down, We'll Go Together"

About four o'clock it began to rain again — to pour. And every time one of those big drops hit the water it made a bubble as big as an egg.

We had water to drink after that. We set out basins and caught the rain-drops. But then suddenly it began to get dark. It had been awful enough before that, but we had taken it good-naturedly and laughed and joked. But now we all began to feel kind of creepy.

We hadn't any food to speak of — cooked food, I mean; and we hadn't any fire, and we hadn't any running water, and it was growing



colder and colder, and we hadn't any light in the house, not even a candle — only matches. And all the time the flood was rising and rising. The people next door told Mr. Collopy they heard another dam was gone.

"Maybe we've got to go down; but, if we do, we'll go together," said Mother Shoyer.

She made us move three beds into the big front bedroom, and we all got ready to spend the night there. Of course, no one intended to sleep; we were all too nervous.

There were ten of us who spent the night in that room. I got Jack and the two children over in one corner, where we could all take hold of one another and go down together, if we had to go. And the men sat along the front windows, looking out. Most of us were in rockers.

The first thing to do was to see how fast the water was rising. So Jack hitched a button-hook on the end of a string, and all night he pulled it up every ten minutes. The water was rising fearfully fast.

So we ten people sat there in the dark, rocking and staring out. It was funny how differently it struck different people. Mr. Shoyer was thinking of his business. He had a lot of jewelry in the store.

"I wonder if any of the show-cases are left now," he'd say. Or, "Do you suppose the safe will go too?"

"Of course it won't," Mother Shoyer would say. "It can't."

Mother Shoyer got religious. She never had been very religious before. She played cards, and things like that.

"It's a judgment on this house," she'd say. "If we ever get through this, believe me, there'll never be another card in this house. Yes, and we'll go to church on Sundays, too!"

She prayed a great deal. "I've got to," she said; "none of the men will."

The water was rising inch by inch. Once it rose an inch and a half in ten minutes, according to our string.

The man that lost his wife would get up every now and then, and walk back and forth in the dark, and say:

"I wonder where she is now — I wonder where she is!"

But Jack and Mr. Collopy sat by the window and smoked; and finally they began to tell comical stories.

"If you clowns don't shut up," said Mother Shoyer, "I'll come over there and kill you both!"

"Look here, Mother," said Jack. "If we've got to die, let's die cheerful, anyhow. They all were singing when the *Titanic* went down. Come on, Collopy, let's sing something."

But we were all getting pretty nervous.

The Awful Cries for Help

It was terribly still; not a sound anywhere, except when somebody'd call out. And then the worst thing began to come — the houses going. It would be perfectly still; and all at once there would be cracking, then a ripping

and tearing noise; and then it would ease off as if the house had slid off its foundations. All the time there were those awful voices crying: "Oh, God, God! Help us! Can't somebody help us?"

But, of course, no boats could get out to anybody in that water. We'd fished up a lot of shutters and planks that morning to make a raft out of, but what good would it have done in those whirlpools?

And all the time the water kept rising.

One way we could tell this was by the steps downstairs; the water kept crawling up them, one after another.

Then — bang! — something hit our house. It was an old brick house, and Jack, who is a builder, had said that the only danger would be if something hit it and knocked out some of the foundation; then it would go sure.

Bang, bang! This thing kept going up against the wall. We looked everywhere, but we could not see it. Finally Jack looked out of the window on the south side.

"Oh, Collopy!" he yelled, "look what's here!"

It was a great iron gasolene storage tank, that had come by and got caught in a whirlpool near the house. It couldn't knock us down, now it was in the eddy. But it kept on banging all night.

Then pretty soon after that there was a kind of a pink glow, and we began to see each other in the room.

"Fire," said Jack. "That's what I'm afraid of."

But we learned afterward that it was Mr. Patterson, at the Cash Register plant, burning some old buildings so his people could have light.

Then bump! bump! bump! — something else. This time we knew what it was. It was Mother Shoyer's piano hitting the ceiling. The water had reached the top of the first floor.

If it came any further, there was no place for us to go except the roof. We'd have to sit astride the ridge-pole in that pouring rain. And pretty soon, of course, the house would go.

The only thing I kept thinking about was of struggling and going down, and having that awful, slimy, yellow water close over us.

"If We Only Had a Revolver"

"If we only had a revolver," I kept saying to myself, "so we could all die quick."

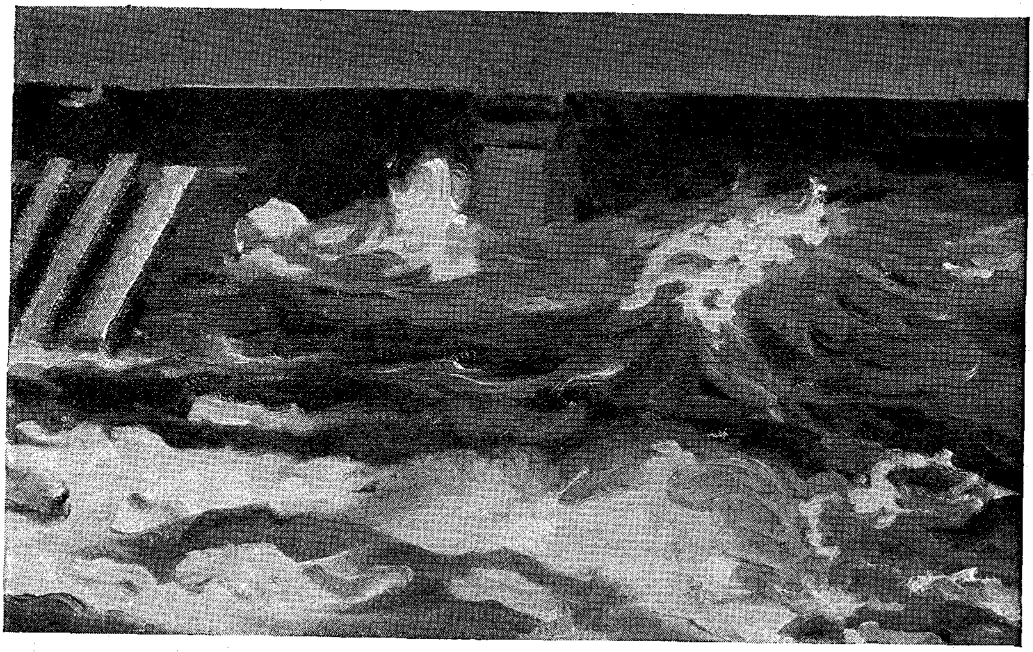
But, of course, I kept as cheerful as I could, and didn't say anything out loud. Nobody cried, not even the children; we all kept our courage up.

But every now and then I kept scooping my hand down quietly on the floor by the chair, to see if I could feel that water coming. I had kept my nerve pretty well till dawn, just as the faint light was coming, when we looked out and saw the water whirling by against the bay-window. And then I forgot myself.

"O God," I said, "if it'd only wait till it was light enough, so they could get boats to us!"

I looked around right after that, and there was Buddie — poor little kid — down on his knees back of the rocking-chair.

"What are you doing, Bud?" I asked.



"I'm praying for the rain to stop coming," he said, "so the flood won't rise any more."

As it happened, it didn't rise much further. We felt pretty good that day. Things certainly seemed better.

In the morning, Jack looked down the stairway and saw a little pasteboard box.

"What's that?" he said.

"Oh, grab it, Jack," I said. "It's candles — the little candles for Buddie's birthday cake."

The thought came to me that I could cook with them. We hadn't had a meal since the sardines and bread the day before. So we fished them up, and I cooked some eggs and very thin ham over the birthday candles for the ten people. They didn't give out much heat, but we cooked the stuff enough so that it tasted fine.

Then, that afternoon, we made another find. We were poking around, and some one noticed the old mantelpiece in Mr. Collopy's room, and said: "I'll bet you there's a fireplace there."

We broke into a kind of sheet-iron arrangement, and there was a fireplace — grate and all — that nobody had ever known about since the Shoyers had owned the place. So we had fire at last. We broke up the shutters we had for the raft; and we all sat around and got warm for the first time; and we had ham and potatoes — a real meal.

The Second Night — Fire

But then, when we thought the worst was over, the fire came. About four o'clock I looked out of the front window and saw a lot of smoke about a block up the street. It was fire all right, and the wind was straight in our direction. There wasn't a thing but frame houses between it and us. Pretty soon it was a blaze, and pieces of charcoal as big as butternuts began falling around us.

Mr. Shoyer was all in.

"I don't care what happens," he said. "I don't want to hear about it till it comes. I've worried all I'm going to."

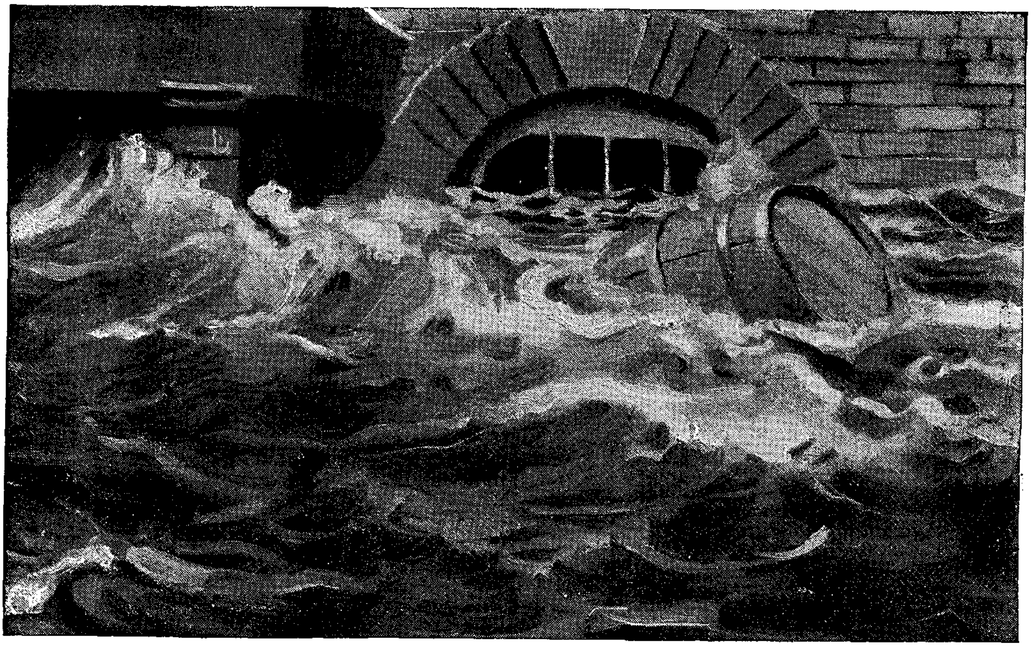
Jack took Mother Shoyer aside, then, and said to her:

"We've taken this so far pretty easy — and laughed and all that. But this is bad. We couldn't get out of here. We'd either burn or drown."

Those pieces of charcoal would fly over, and land on the tin roof of the bay-window, and break out into a flame right in the rain.

So we women set to work, and all that evening we tore up sheets into strips. For there wasn't a rope in the house. Then we tied on buckets and pans, and got everything ready for the men to draw up water if the fire came.

But it never came, after all. The snow saved us. For the rain turned to snow and sleet late Wednesday afternoon, and lay on the roof. But I don't believe that would have saved us if the wind hadn't changed. The night before we had sat up all night watching the water; Wednesday night we sat watching the wind and fire. It was just as bad, I suppose; only we'd got kind of used to it — kind of numb. It all



seemed like a dream, anyhow. Finally the wind drifted away from us, and the fire turned and went west.

Thursday morning the water had gone down quite a little; it stopped raining some. And once that morning we saw the sun, and everybody cheered. For the first time, boats could go through our street. We got some canned salmon and a little piece of bread from the first one.

By Thursday noon the dirt on the railroad track began to show and relief parties came down from the high land along the track. And finally the man we saved was taken off in a canoe.

He looked back and shook his hand and yelled, "God bless you!" And that's the last we saw of "the guy that lost his wife." I wonder what his name was, and whether he found her all right.

That night — Thursday — we thought we'd get some sleep. Nobody had slept since Monday night. The men agreed that everybody could go to sleep, and they would take the alarm-clock in their room, and set it so it would go off every twenty minutes. For the fire was still going, up above us.

We went to sleep, and the first I knew there was another big thump. I looked at my watch. It was two o'clock. The men had set the alarm, but they had forgotten all about winding the clock.

The noise startled me — and I suppose I was tired. Anyhow, I fainted dead away. And it took them twenty minutes to bring me back to consciousness.

"I thought you were dead, sure," Mother Shoyer told me afterward.

It was lucky I woke up, though. The fire had worked around a complete circle, and was back where it had started. And all of a sudden it was worse than ever.

"It's Lowe's paint shop," said Jack, looking out of the window.

It was a fierce fire — all smoke and red flame from the paints and oils. And with it was the worst yelling and shrieking we had heard. The Beckel House was diagonally across from it on the corner, and the women in the hotel were yelling. It looked as if it must go. And it was only two short blocks from us.

The firemen were going around the fire in boats; but they had nothing to throw water with. The only thing they could do was to blow all the buildings up with dynamite, so as to stop the fire from spreading. You could hear the explosions all night.

Well, they stopped the fire with dynamite; but there was no more sleep that night for us. I couldn't sleep, anyway. Whenever I lay down, I just twitched and twitched all over.

Next morning — Friday — there was the top of the iron fence again, and by noon the lawns were showing. It did look good to see the ground again; and pretty soon people were moving around, visiting.

"Hello, up there," you could hear them call. "Everybody all right?"

The funniest thing was that everybody had forgotten what day of the week it was. It seemed months. And you could hear people saying, "What day is it, anyhow?" We had to get out a calendar to find out.

The Strange Negroes Appear

It seemed as if we'd had enough; but that day, right off, the looters came. They were a lot of strange negroes that drifted into town, and nobody knew where they came from. If it hadn't been that the militia came at the same time, I don't know what would have happened.

Friday noon Mrs. Shoyer went up to look at the store; and while she was there she stepped out into the alleyway beside it. And there Ralph Spencer, the engineer who used to be with Jack, had a negro. He had caught him cutting a dead woman's hand off at the wrist. Spencer had a revolver with him, and he made the negro put up his hands, and marched him to the station-house. And, when they got him there, they said they found fifteen fingers with rings on them in his pocket. You'd think, as Mother Shoyer said, they'd be afraid — after all that had happened — that God would strike them dead.

All that night — Friday — we heard the militiamen firing at the looters. We counted forty-eight rifle shots.

Then, all of a sudden, whang! bang! There was somebody down under us. We thought it was downstairs. And the militiaman in front of the house was firing at him.

"There was a negro trying to get into that empty house next door," said the militiaman (the people next door had left the house), "and I took a shot at him. I don't believe I hit him, though; I can't find any blood anywhere."

Of course, we couldn't sleep that night, either — most of us. The children did, though. I was thankful for that. But, every time I lay down, I just stayed awake and twitched all over.

Well, that was about all. On Monday we came home to New York. We lost all the clothes we had. But the people that were in bad luck were the people who lived there and had to start all over again.

"I Wish I Had Never Seen Dayton"

You ought to have seen that house of the Shoyers' on Friday, when the water went down. The mud was up to the knees of the men's rubber boots, all over the first floor, that filthy, gluey mud. They had to clear paths through it, at first, just like clearing a walk after a snowstorm. Mrs. Shoyer's expensive pianola was all smashed up. Her fine books were all gone or ruined. Her new furniture just fell to pieces; the water had soaked the glue out, or something, and when they took hold of it to lift it up, it fell into boards, and they threw them out of the windows.

But that was nothing to the store. On Friday afternoon poor Mother Shoyer came back from looking at it, with the tears streaming down her cheeks. "We're back just where we started from," she said.

Of course, there was no insurance for flood damage. Mr. Shoyer wouldn't even look at the store until the day after.

When we left Monday morning, he was sieving out the mud in the bottom of the store for jewelry. He put all the mud in ash sieves, and turned the water from a hose on it very carefully. They'd got some cuff buttons; but most of them were plated ones.

Monday noon we walked two miles to the railroad station, and came back to New York. There were a lot of flood people on the train with us, of course.

"Dayton, Dayton," you'd hear them say. "I wish I'd never seen Dayton."

My greatest trouble was that I couldn't sleep. From Monday night till Tuesday night of the next week, all the sleep I had was that few hours on Thursday night. And all that time I had been standing on my feet all day, cooking for ten and afterward for fourteen people — over candles, and the open fireplace, and finally an old stove. Besides, I'd been taking care of the children. I hadn't even changed my clothes until Monday — just a week.

When I went to a shoe store, to get rid of those old hard shoes that had soaked and dried on my feet, the proprietor said to me:

"I'm sorry to say, you've got temporary fallen arches on both of your feet."

Tuesday night I did sleep at last. But for days I didn't want to talk about it — nor did any of the rest of us. The children at school and the teachers try to get my children to talk about it. They won't. You can't get a word out of them.

"I wish they'd keep still about that flood, mama," says Bud.

I know just how he feels.

A woman asked me rather suddenly, just after I got home, to tell her about it. I just looked at her and began to tremble all over. I couldn't say a word.

THE WOMAN IN MARBLE

BY

LEONARD MERRICK

AUTHOR OF "ARIBAUD'S TWO WIVES," ETC.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. GRAHAM COOTES

IN the Square Carnot, which teems with little Parisians in charge of English nurses, Ada Simpson wheeled the baby carriage to a bench on fine mornings, and exchanged patriotic sentiments with her compeers. When criticism of France flagged, Ada Simpson occasionally observed. So, as she always entered the square at the same end and nearly always chose the same bench, she observed the eccentric proceedings of a young man who took to coming every morning to stare at the statue on the opposite grass-plot. After standing before it as if he were glued there, the young man would reverse one of the chairs that faced the path in an orderly line, and then sit mooning at the statue, with his back to everybody, for nearly an hour. It was, Miss Simpson surmised, a statue to a departed Frenchy. She had never approached it to ascertain what name it bore, and could see nothing about the thing to account for the fellow's taking such stock in it. When he had appeared for nine days in succession, she and her circle had nicknamed him "the rum 'un."

On the tenth day, instead of the young man, a woman went to the statue, and stood before it just as stupidly, and as long as he had done. The most comical bit was that, when she turned away at last, it was seen that the statue had been making the woman cry. After that, neither of the funny pair came back to the Square Carnot; but, as Ada Simpson chooses the same bench still, she sometimes recalls their queerness and, before her mind wanders, tries again to guess their game. This is the game that Ada Simpson tries to guess.

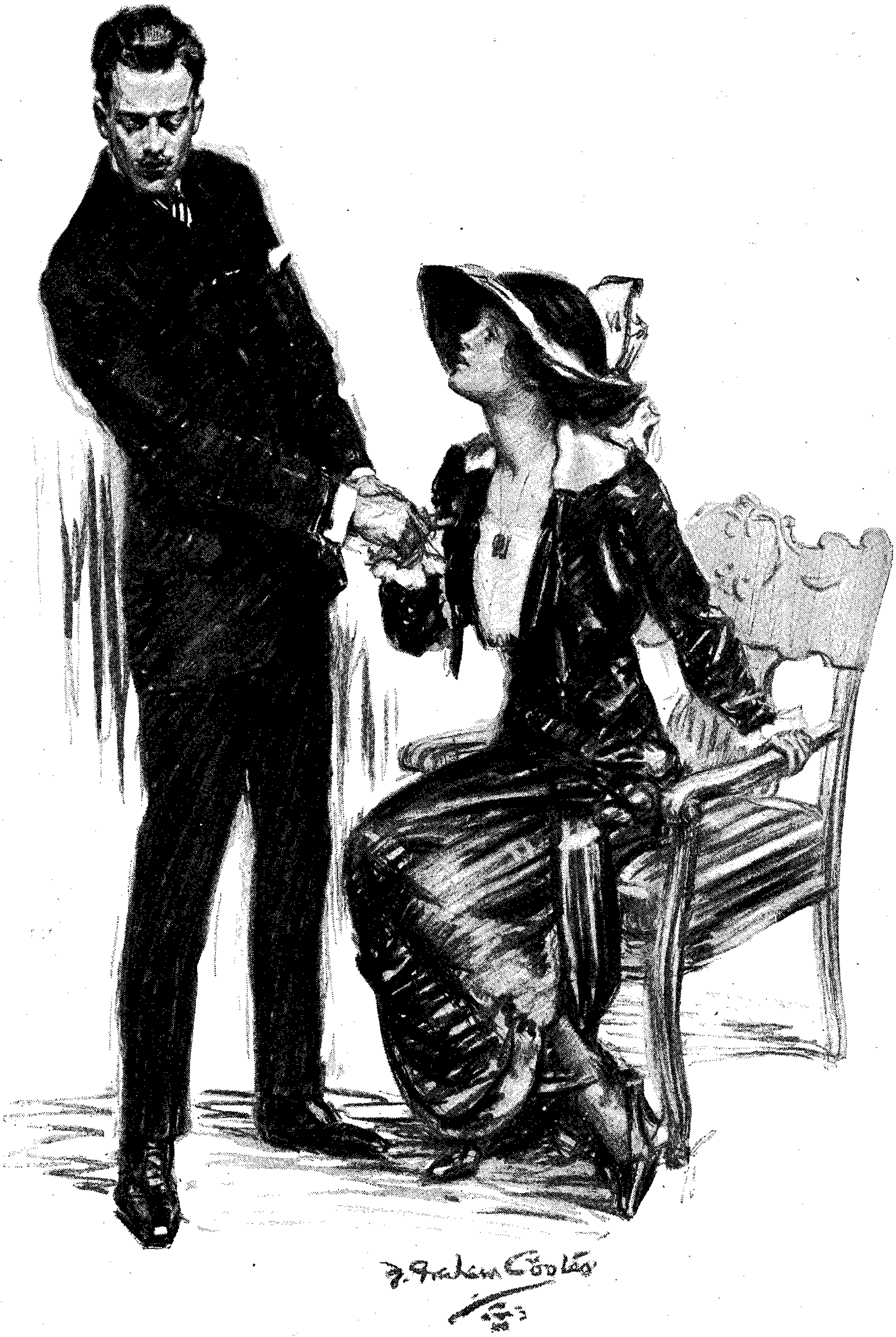
Gaby Dupuy was wishing that the summer were over. She was a model — not one of the wretched models that wait at the corner of the Boulevards Raspail and Montparnasse on Mondays to crave the vote of students in academies: she went by appointment to the ateliers of the successful. But now the painters and the sculptors were all at the seaside, and her appointment-book had shown no sitting for ever so long.

Gaby's qualities had never placed her among the stars of her profession. Nobody had ever said of her, as a great man said of one of the most celebrated of models, that he had only to reproduce her faithfully. Still less could it be asserted that she had the genius to penetrate an artist's purport and present the pose that was eluding him. But, if she had neither the beauty of a Sarah Brown nor the intuition of a Dubosc, her face possessed a certain attractiveness, and she could achieve the expression demanded of her when it had been laboriously explained.

Once upon a time her face had been more attractive still; Gaby wasn't so young as she used to be.

While the woman was regretting that her scanty provision for the dreaded summer would not allow her a more adequate menu, she received a letter. A stranger, who signed himself "Jacques Launay," earnestly desired an interview. He wrote that, being unfamiliar with Paris, he had had great difficulty in ascertaining her address, and added that, as his stay in the capital was drawing to a close, he would deeply appreciate the favor of an early reply. Her eyebrows climbed as she saw that, in lieu of requiring her to betake herself to his studio, he "begged for the privilege of calling upon her at any hour that she might find convenient." Probably, though, as a provincial, he hadn't got a studio here! Still, what deference! — he had written to her as if she were of the *ancienne noblesse.*

But, if he hadn't a studio, where did he expect her to "sit"? Did he want her to go to him in the country? Yes, that must be it. *Flûte!* Gaby didn't think it would be good enough. The end of the dead season was in sight at last, and in Paris she would often be booked for two sittings a day. Nevertheless she was eager to



"'OH, I AM MOVED — BELIEVE ME, I AM REALLY MOVED!' SHE PUT OUT HER HAND TO HIM IMPULSIVELY" hear what he had to say for himself. She answered that he could see her at seven o'clock the following evening at the Paradis des Artistes, round the corner. To meet him at a restaurant, she reflected, would at least insure his asking her to have something to drink, and, as the tables would be laid by seven o'clock, he might even spring to a meal.

The Paradis des Artistes was a small establishment where for three francs one found a homely dinner, inclusive of wine, and a cripple who wore a red jacket, to look like a Tzigane, and chanted to a mandolin. The *artistes* were chiefly models and the lesser lights of a café-concert. As most of the company knew one another, and the proprietress called many of the ladies by their Christian names, and played piquet with them between midnight and 2 A. M., the tone of the restaurant was as informal as a family party. When Gaby arrived, the only person present whom she had never seen there before was a young man who sat at a table near the door, solitary and seemingly expectant. Their gaze met; but, although he looked undecided, he did not salute her. Then, as she was greeted by acquaintances, somebody cried, "*Gaby, comment va?*" and the young man's head was turned again. If he was her correspondent, it was rather odd that he didn't know her when he saw her, but she gave him another opportunity. . . . He approached with marked hesitation.

"Mademoiselle Gabrielle Dupuy?"

"*Mais oui, monsieur,*" she said, smiling graciously. "It is Monsieur Launay?"

"Oh, mademoiselle, it is most kind of you!" faltered the stranger. His confusion was extraordinary, considering his age, for he could not have been less than seven or eight and twenty. They stood mute for some seconds. As he remained too embarrassed to suggest her taking a seat at his table, "I hope I have not kept you waiting?" she asked, carelessly moving toward it.

They sat down now, and the waitress, whose tone was informal too, whisked over with, "And for Mademoiselle Dupuy?"

"Give me a glass of *madère*, Louise," she said.

Still the young man seemed unable to find his tongue, and she went on:

"I am afraid this place was rather out of the way for you? But I have got into the habit of dropping in here about this time, and it is cozy and one can talk."

"Yes," he assented. He stole a timid glance at her, and looked quickly away. "Oh, yes!"

"Who was it that gave you my address at last, monsieur?"

"I do not know," he said awkwardly. "It was a man who heard me inquiring. I had immense trouble to find it out."

"It is not a dead secret, however."

"I suppose not — no; but I have no friends in Paris, I have never been in Paris before. And at the start I did not even know who you were."

"You did not know who I was? Oh, you had seen something I had posed for?"

"Yes, it was like that. I was anxious to find you, but I did not know your name. And I had no one to help me," he stammered. "It was enormously difficult."

"You are a painter, Monsieur Launay?"

"No, mademoiselle."

"Ah, a sculptor! That interests me still more."

"I am not a sculptor, either, mademoiselle," he admitted. "I am a composer."

"A composer?" she echoed. "But — but a composer does not employ models!"

"No, mademoiselle; but I beg you not to think my motive impudent!" exclaimed the young man, with the first touch of spontaneity that he had shown.

"Mysterious merely!" she smiled. Her expression offered him encouragement to elucidate the mystery, but nervousness seemed to overcome him again. He was boring her. She exchanged remarks across the room with a lady who wore one of those figured veils under which the victim of fashion appears to have lost portions of her face.

"Going to feed, Gaby?"

"Yes, my dear, in a minute," she answered.

She saw her correspondent regard the announcement "Diner, 3 francs." His invitation was constrained and her acceptance listless.

It no doubt surprised the young man to discover that the veiled lady was his guest as well; he must have wondered how it had happened. Also, it may have startled him, when he made to fill Gaby's glass from one of the little decanters that stood before them, to learn that she "did not take it," and to see a bottle labeled "Pouilly Fuissé" display itself before he could say "Why?"— for he had not heard it ordered. He heard no order given for the second bottle that he beheld, nor for the *tarte aux cerises* that graced their repast, a delicacy that was not a feature of the other people's. But, though these incidents may have caused him disquietude, since he was far from having an air of wealth, he manifested no objection to them. Gaby allowed that that was *gentil*. A singularly taciturn host, but an amenable one! And, briefly as he spoke, he yielded continuous attention to her prattle to the lady with the veil. It was queer that the more she prattled the more despondent he grew! She found him piquing her curiosity.

When a bill for twenty-nine francs fifty was presented to him, after the *café filtré* and Egyptian cigarettes, Gaby put out her hand for it, and knocked off four francs without discussion. "I don't let them make their little mistakes with friends of mine," she told him languidly, rising. "I am going home to get my coat — you can come with me." He accepted her invitation with as scant enthusiasm as she had shown for his own; and by way of a hint, forgetful of her earlier statement, she added: "This place is rotten — it's so noisy and one can't talk!"

But he proved no more talkative in the street. One might almost have imagined that the task of explaining his petition for the interview was a duty that he sought to escape.

Her lodging was so close that the doorway took him aback. He followed her up the stairs submissively. Her impatience for the coat had plainly subsided; for, after lighting the lamp, she lit another of the cigarettes and sat. The young man stood staring from the window.

"Well, chatterbox?" she said.

He swung round with unexpected vehemence. "I am aware I look a hopeless idiot to you!" he cried.

But — what an idea!" Her gesture was all surprised denial.

"I prayed to see you, I said nothing all the evening, I stand like a dummy here! I must tell you why I wrote, I know. But — but it is not so easy as I thought it would be; I shall have to entreat your patience."

"Not the least in the world! I find you interesting already."

"Listen!" he exclaimed. "I had had only two passions in my life — music and the poetry of Richardière. No other poet has meant half, a tithe so much to me as he. His work inspired me when I was a boy; if I had had the means, I would have taken the journey to Paris just to wait on the pavement and see his face when he went out. When he died — Of course, all France mourned his loss, but none but his dearest friends, I think, could have felt as I did! Well, since I have been a man I have made an opera of his 'Arizath,' and I came to Paris last week because there was a prospect of its being produced. Five minutes after I had found a room at a hotel, I was asking my way to the Square Carnot to see the statue to him. I knew nothing about it but that it had been erected there, and as I approached it my heart sank. I had always pictured a statue of the man, and I saw merely a bust of him. The statue was of a woman, recalling a verse."

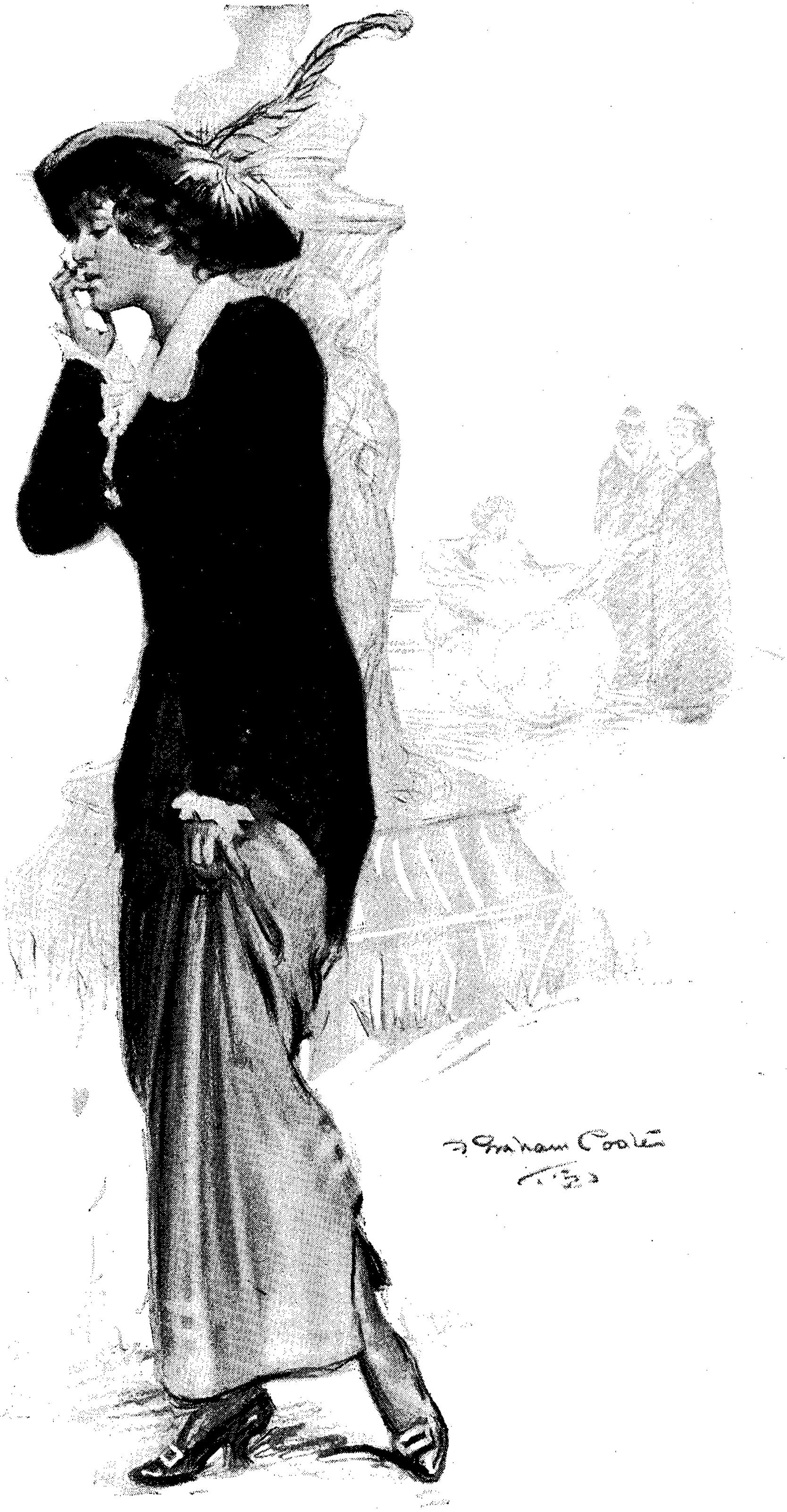
She nodded. "I know! Beauvais kept me posing for three hours and a half without budging, and I had a chilblain that itched like mad on the finger inside the book."

"The disappointment was keen. I almost wished I had not come — for it had been a long walk and I was very tired. And then, after I had stood looking at the bust, noting how handsome he had been and thinking of his genius, I looked at the statue of the woman — and I felt that it would have been worth coming simply to see that. It was so wonderful, so real! The naturalness of the attitude, the perfection of the toilette — I had never realized that the sculptor's art could do such things. I think I looked for minutes at the slippers; I admired the sleeves, the sweep of the gown, that seemed as if it must be soft to touch; I was amazed by a thousand trifles before my glance lingered on the face. And after my glance lingered on the face I saw nothing else — I could not even move to look at it in profile. It held me fixed."

"It is Beauvais' masterpiece," said Gaby; "they all say it is the finest thing he has done."

"It is a masterpiece, yes. But I was not thinking of the sculptor and his art any more; I was thinking of the face, without remembering how it had come about. It was as if a beautiful mind were really pondering behind that brow. The character of the mouth and chin impressed me as if the marble had been flesh and blood; the abstracted eyes could not have stirred me to more reverence if they had had sight. And while I looked at them they seemed, by an optical illusion, to meet my own. Not with interest, with an unconsciousness that mortified me — they seemed to gaze through my insignificance into the greatness of Richardière! I blinked, I suppose, for the next instant they had been averted. I wanted them to come back, to realize my presence. I concentrated all my will upon the effort to trick myself once more — and I could have sworn they turned! Now, too, they seemed to notice me; there was a smile in them, an ironical smile — they smiled at the presumption of my linking an immortal poet's work with mine! Insane! But I felt it; I shrank from the derision. Again I raised my head to Richardière, and for the first time I remarked that his expression was a poor acknowledgment of the figure's homage. It was consequential and impertinent. A tinge of cruelty in it, even! He had an air of sensualism, of one who held women very light. I could imagine his having said horrible things to women. He was not worthy of the look in the statue's eyes. . . .

"I went there next day, after vowing that


F. Graham Cootes
'13

"ON THE TENTH DAY, INSTEAD OF THE YOUNG MAN, A WOMAN WENT TO THE STATUE. . . .
WHEN SHE TURNED AWAY, IT WAS SEEN THAT THE STATUE HAD BEEN MAKING HER CRY"

I would not go. The eyes discerned me sooner this time, and I contrived to fancy that their gaze was gentler. I was happy in the fancy that their gaze was gentler. When the eyes wandered from me I was humbled, and when they looked in mine I held my breath. I persuaded myself — no, I did not 'persuade myself'; the thought was born — that there was comprehension in the gaze, that my worship, though undesired, was understood. In the afternoon I had a business appointment that I had been thinking about for weeks; but, instead of being excited by its nearness, I regretted that it obliged me to leave the Square Carnot. When I kept the appointment, the bad news that there had been a delay in the arrangements hardly troubled me; I was only impatient to be outside. Originally my plan had been to see the Louvre as soon as the business was over — now my one desire was to return to the statue. It was a delight to hasten to it. People must have thought me bound for a rendezvous as I strolled smiling through the streets. Not once did I regard the arrogance of Richardière on the pedestal, but it was only in moments that the musing figure ceased to remind me that her god was there. Though I never looked at it, an intense repugnance for the face of Richardière was in my blood — a jealousy, if you will. It possessed me while I was away, while I was reiterating that I had made my last visit to the square, knowing nevertheless that on the morrow I should yield again. The jealousy persisted when I turned the pages of my opera now, and the magic of the master's poetry was gone. I could not forget his domination of the figure; I wanted to think of the beautiful statue freed, aloof from him!"

He had left the window and was moving restlessly about the room. Intent, her face propped by her hands, the model for the statue sat and watched him. The cigarette between her lips was out.

"The fact that there must have been a model for it was borne upon me quite suddenly. It had the thrill of a revelation, and nearly dazed me. This woman lived! Somewhere in the world she was walking, speaking! It was as if a miracle had happened, as if the statue had come to life. I repeated breathlessly that it was true, but it appeared fabulous. I had attributed emotions to the marble figure with ease — to grasp the simple truth of the woman's existence was inconceivably difficult; I trembled with the marvel of it — Pygmalion was not more stupefied than I. When my heart left off pounding so hard, I began to question how long it would take me to discover who she was. I did not even know the way to set about it. But I knew that if she was in France I meant to find her. . . . I need not talk about the rest."

After a silence she stirred and spoke:

"It was a triumph to pose for the statue; your story makes me very proud!"

"I could not avoid telling it to you," answered the young man drearily.

"But how you say it — as if you had done wrong! Shall I tell you what would have been wrong? Not to let me know! That would have been pathetic. *Mon Dieu!* it would be atrocious for a woman to have done all that and never to hear. And to think that at the beginning I fancied you were — You were so quiet while we dined!"

"I was listening to you," he sighed.

"That's true; you were entitled to it by then — you had done much to get the chance!"

"Yes; I had done much to get the chance."

"It was beautiful of you. I mean it! Because you have spoken earnestly, from your heart, and I could see — I could see very well — that what you were saying was true, that you were not exaggerating to please me. Oh, I am moved — believe me, I am really moved!" She put out her hand to him impulsively, and he took it, as in duty bound. But he did not raise it to his lips. Her body stiffened a little as the hand dropped slowly to her lap. A shade of apprehension aged her face. Again there was silence.

"Well?" she murmured.

"Well?"

"*Enfin*, when you sought the chance, when you wrote to me at last, you foresaw — what?"

"Infinitely less than you have granted, mademoiselle," he returned, with an obvious effort. "A briefer meeting, a more formal one. I thank you most gratefully for your patience, your kindness, the honor you have done me."

She gave a harsh laugh. "And now you regret that you must say 'good night'?"

"It is a fact that I have to see my man again this evening," he acknowledged, hurriedly glancing at his watch. "I had forgotten the time."

"Yes," said the woman; "you had forgotten the time — you had forgotten that the statue was modeled ten years ago. . . . So you did not find her, after all? You began your search too late!"

"It is not that!" he cried, distressed.

"Oh!" She had sprung to her feet, and stood panting. "Why lie to me? I am sorry for you, in a way; you have not been consciously a brute."

"A brute?"

"What do you imagine you have been? A fool to yourself, you think. I have changed, and you should have known I must have changed; it would have spared you the bother of seeking me, the disillusion when we met — there are no wrinkles creeping on the statue! Oh, it has been a fraud for you; I realize the sell! But you are not the only sufferer by your folly. A man can not talk to a woman as you have talked to me, and leave her cold; he can not say, 'I felt all this for you before I saw you — now, good-by!' and leave her proud; he can't adore her in the marble and disdain her in the flesh without her being ashamed. You have degraded me, jeered at me; you have taunted me with every blemish on my skin!"

"It is not that!" he cried again. "I was a fool — I own it; a brute, if you choose to call me one. But it is not that!"

"What, then? Is it my frock that alters me? I am poor; I can not afford such a gown as Beauvais put on me for the statue. Is it the way my hair is dressed? I can dress it like the statue again. The brow — you liked the brow. Well, look! Time hasn't been so rough on me there; the brow is young. And you need not be jealous of my thoughts of Richardière, for I have never read a word he wrote. What is there lacking in me? Tell me what you miss?"

"I can not tell you," he groaned. But he had started.

"You *have* told me," she said, shrinking. "I know now. My face is ignorant; the statue has more mind than I!"

He no longer said, "It is not that!" He drooped before her, dumb, contrite.

After a long pause, she quavered, dabbing at her eyes:

"Well, I am not an idiot; I should improve!"

"Is it an imbecile like me who could teach you?"

"I should be content."

"Never in a single hour! I fell in love with an ideal, and went to look for it. Failure was ordained. It is I who lack sense, not you."

A ghost of a smile twitched her lips. "It was all the fault of that Beauvais. He stuck an expression on me with the clothes! I did look like that in his studio, though the chilblain was burning. But, even if I made myself look like it now, it would not take you in, would it? Don't look so frightened of me; I shall not go on at you again. Poor boy, you have had a deuce of an evening! . . . . Well, I suppose you are right; failure was ordained — and it is wise to cut one's failures short. You may go. And do not flatter yourself that you have hurt me so much as I said. My vanity was stung for a minute, that is all; to-morrow I shall have forgotten all about you. . . . You can find your way downstairs?"

He hesitated — and took a sudden step toward her with half opened arms.

"Good night!" she said, not moving. "Good-by!"

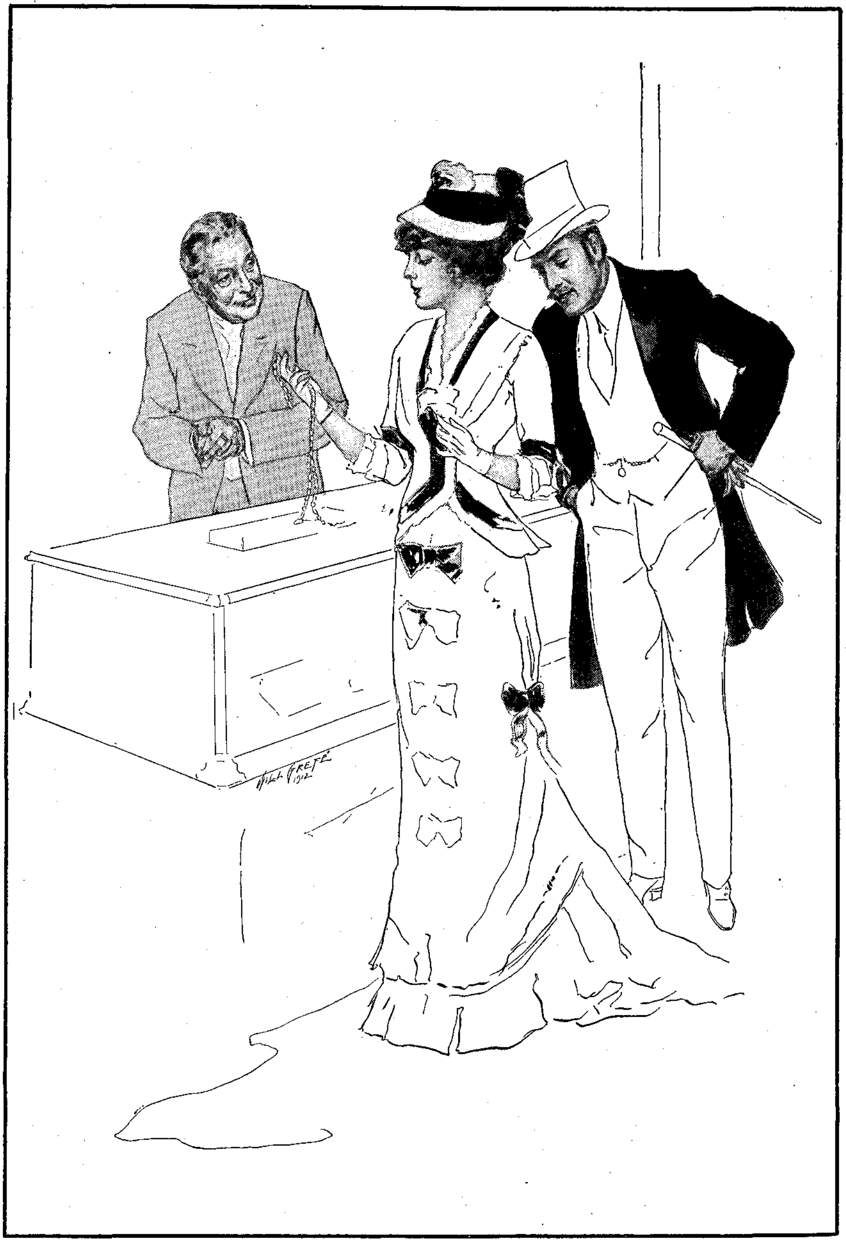
On the tenth day, instead of the young man, a woman went to the statue, and stood before it just as stupidly, and as long as he had done. The most comical bit was that, when she turned away at last, it was seen that the statue had been making the woman cry. After that, neither of the funny pair came back to the Square Carnot; but, as Ada Simpson chooses the same bench still, she sometimes recalls their queerness and, before her mind wanders, tries again to guess their game. This was the game that Ada Simpson tries to guess.

McCLURE'S TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY NUMBER

In August — ten short stories — eight articles — two serials: a twenty-feature magazine for McCLURE'S twentieth anniversary. Here are some of the features:

"The Salamanders" . . . . *by OWEN JOHNSON*
"The Adventures of Jenny Pearl" . *by COMPTON MACKENZIE*
"After Thirty" . . . . *by JULIAN STREET*
"Behind the Windows" . . . . *by WARD MUIR*
"The Industrious Chevalier" . . . . . . *by S. SQUIRE SPRIGGE*
"The Head of Caesar" . . . . *by G. K. CHESTERTON*

A new Merwin story, a new Peggy story, a new Helen Van Campen story, and
"WHEN McCLURE'S MAGAZINE BEGAN," by Jeannette L. Gilder


Will Grefé 1912

"HE was the nation's prince of spenders — she was the thriftiest of actresses. He told her to pick out anything she wanted"

SELLING JEWELS TO MULTIMILLIONAIRES

The Duchess of Montrose's Necklace

BY

ARTHUR HOWARD

AUTHOR OF "THE PRODIGAL"

ILLUSTRATIONS BY WILL GREFÉ

IN 1912 MCCLURE'S published the story of the man who walked out of Sherry's with $25 in his pocket and half a million of debts in Wall Street, to start life over again. At the time Arthur Howard left New York a ruined man, he was known as the most expert jewelry salesman in the United States. For fifty years his father's firm had been one of the "pet" jewelry establishments of the great millionaires. It was the firm in New York where the spenders of the nation dropped their tens and hundreds of thousands.

The history of this firm — from the days when a $7,000 pair of diamond ear-rings was the record for a single sale, to the time when men began to buy $250,000 pearl necklaces and to ransack Europe for perfect gems — is the history of America's industrial metamorphosis. The books of the firm tell the story of America's dynasties: from the Land Kings of the '70's — the diamond ear-ring crowd — and the Railroad Kings of the '80's, who bought sapphire-and-diamond stars, to the Oil and Steel and Copper Kings of to-day, who specialize in five-foot strings of matched pearls. The story of this jewelry concern is one of the great romances of American commerce.

In the series which begins with this number, Arthur Howard will tell some of the most characteristic and extraordinary of his experiences as a jewelry salesman. The deadly rivalries, the strange caprices, the family feuds and jealousies; the insatiable ambition of the men, the wild extravagance of the women: the whole genesis and progress of the great American multimillionaires are reflected in his story.

I WAS born just off Fifth Avenue. All my life I have watched the multimillionaires of America march in and establish their women there.

It was a little dull, provincial street, with horsehair-furnitured parlors, when I first remember it. I have seen it grow into the craziest center of feminine extravagance in the world. And, all my business life, I have lived and speculated on the greatest of all these wild extravagances — the jewels of the women of the multimillionaires.

It seems curious, now, when I recall the time that this thing began in the '70's. Our shop was situated then on Broadway, just north of Union Square. To the west and southwest lay the beginnings of Fifth Avenue — a little shoot of a street, as yet, leading out of the rich old aristocratic soil of Washington Square. The queer old Dutch farming families of New York lived there — just blossoming, after a century's clutching to the land of Manhattan, from millionaires into multimillionaires, as the great city crawled north.

They were close, that generation — heaven only knows how close! They held the first acres of the ancestral farm; they kept under glass the first dollar that their forefather ever earned, and held family prayers to it every morning. They were farmers, by instinct, still. Almost opposite our store on Broadway, one of them — worth fifteen or twenty million in New York real estate — still kept a family cow. Ornamenting women has never been the farmers' especial sin; and, when it came to buying jewelry, the height of riotous extravagance was diamond ear-rings.

We went through a curious experience with one of these families in the '70's. We had in stock a pair of large diamonds, slightly yellow. Our price was $1,800 for the pair. One day one of the old-time owners of New York came in and agreed to buy them for his wife — on one condition: we were to bill them to him at $3,000. We refused, and he went to buy them elsewhere.

A short time afterward he died. His widow promptly appeared at the store where he had finally bought her ear-rings, presented the receipted bill for them, and insisted on the firm taking back the stones at about what the bill for them had been. Rather than lose her custom forever, they did so — and lost hundreds of dollars by the transaction.

I don't tell this story to reflect upon these particular millionaires; as a matter of fact, they were the extravagants of their day; and five or six thousand dollars for diamond ear-rings was a looseness in money affairs that set the moralists of a provincial continent to wailing.

This period of diamond ear-rings — varied by the diamond solitaire — lasted well through the '70's. Six or seven thousand dollars was the highest single sale that could be accomplished. But in that decade the older Astors were dying out; and William Astor's wife moved up into Fifth Avenue, where the Waldorf now stands, and began to take command of New York society.

It was the American women's declaration of extravagance. Mrs. Astor's jewels, emeralds and diamonds, were the wonder of the day. Upon the marriage of the first of the next generation of Astors, the jewelry trade was overwhelmed at a sale made by an old jewelry house in New York. The young man bought for his bride a pearl necklace costing $25,000. The day of the multimillionaires' women was dawning in America.

The Big Necklace and the Thrifty Actress

In the next five years came the era of the actresses. You can say what you like about the American multimillionaire — he is, generally speaking, a domestic animal, after all, and his major extravagances, at least, are always for his wife. But there was one period in the '80's when the jewelry extravagance was mostly performed for actresses, the buyers being successful speculators and men about town.

There were two actresses of that time who were famed for the brilliancy of their jewels. One received hers from a successful stockbroker, a dapper, handsome little chap — the "Wall Street broker" of the old story-book. The other's gifts — heralded across the continent — came from the scion of a Fifth Avenue family who had fallen into an income of about $80,000 a year.

He was the nation's prince of spenders; she was the thriftiest of actresses. He came into our shop one day, and told her, with a wave of his hand, to pick out anything she wanted. She went over our stock with excruciating care, and picked out the most expensive piece we had. It was worth $25,000 — a miracle of extravagance for its day.

She was a very thrifty actress, and laid away a great deal of jewelry. But I doubt if, between them, these two stage princesses of the early '80's had $75,000 worth of jewels. The extravagance of American women was just waking.

The Vanderbilts' Jewelry Campaign

It was the Vanderbilts, in the last of the '80's, who really waked it. The older generations were dead — father and son. A fortune of $150,000,000 — the first in America — had come to the hands of young people; and they started out to spend it. They built their palaces to the north of the Astors on Fifth Avenue; they entertained near-royalty from abroad; and they became the first great jewelry-buyers of America.

Their spending was for a very definite purpose: they were waging a campaign of occupation against Fifth Avenue. For the Vanderbilts were nothing socially then. That natural leader of women, young Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt (now Mrs. Oliver H. P. Belmont), went on ahead, shooting off money like Roman candles in a campaign parade; and jewels were one of the most dazzling parts of the display.

Jewels have been successful as a social weapon ever since Solomon was captivated by the Queen of Sheba. The Vanderbilts were successful, and ever since they have been the great jewelry-buying family of America. They make lavish gifts of jewelry on holidays and birthdays; and never is there a big Vanderbilt marriage to-day but the big jewelers of Fifth Avenue lay out scores or hundreds of thousands of dollars in an ornament especially made to catch the eye of the groom seeking a special present for his bride.

From this campaigning of the Vanderbilts grew up the modern jewelry business of Fifth Avenue. The transient trade is worth something, of course; but the great profit comes from the big purchases of the multimillionaires. They provide more than half of the business of the big stores; and that half is vastly more profitable than the other. So the jewelry stores follow them as they move up the Avenue, display their goods, and supply them as the family grocer does. Both are caterers to multimillionaires.

We followed them, of course, right up the residence street; and we got our share of customers. We made up big pieces now and then in the '80's, as an experiment — to see if the American multimillionaire would be tempted into buying them, as the Europeans bought. But without success. We made up a $50,000 diamond necklace once. It was no use; we had to break it up again, and sell the parts. It was the day of the $25,000 limit for American jewelry stores.

The First $100,000 Necklace and the Rajah

In the '90's one of the Vanderbilt family began to lift the limit a little. Every year for three years he bought a piece — generally of diamonds or emeralds, worth between $30,000 and $40,000. Then, unexpectedly, in 1893 he gave me an order for a $100,000 emerald-and-diamond necklace.

A $100,000 piece of jewelry — it was a monument in the jewelry trade! No doubt there were a few such pieces in America; but, if there were, they had been bought abroad. I was to sell, so far as I knew, the greatest piece of jewelry ever sold in America. The sale of it meant an old-fashioned small fortune in itself. At the usual jewelers' profit of twenty-five per cent, it meant $25,000 to me.

I sailed at once for Paris,— that world center of the ornamentation of women,— happy with my commission. Hundred-thousand-dollar retail sales of jewelry were not common then, even in Paris — two or three a year, perhaps; now there are twenty or thirty or fifty — mostly to Americans, of course. But in 1893 I was engaged in an astonishing transaction, and I was correspondingly proud. I thought I was doing something toward making history in the world. It seems funny, now, to think of it.

When I got on the steamer, coming home, I ran across a queer figure. A young Indian Rajah was on board — traveling from England to the World's Fair at Chicago, with a crowd of attendants and a couple of wives. He was a bored, languid, feeble-legged individual, with an Oriental potentate's sense of humor, which he indulged on the voyage by tottering around the deck and throwing things — generally fruit — at the rows of passengers in deck-chairs. He would stop and shy an orange or a banana into the lap of a perfect stranger, and then stand and regard him with a benign smile. And, as there were three or four hundred pounds of bony attendants behind him, the stranger generally smiled back.

This man was very much interested in jewelry; he wore a good deal, and was fond of talking about it. I thought he would be interested in my great achievement, so I told him about it. He was.

"A $100,000 necklace — that is fine. Come, let me see it," he said.

It was not strung yet, but I promised him to take it around to the Waldorf, where he would be staying, after it was made up.

"Very good," he said; "do. I am interested in emeralds. I have an emerald mine myself. The best I keep; the others I sell to Europe."

When it was strung, I took my necklace around to the Waldorf, went up to his room, and unwrapped and proudly displayed it.

The languid Rajah laughed aloud — a really hearty laugh. Then he reached up and loosened his collar and took from his neck an emerald necklace whose like I had never seen before, nor have I since. My $100,000 string looked pathetic beside it; it was certainly three times as good as mine.

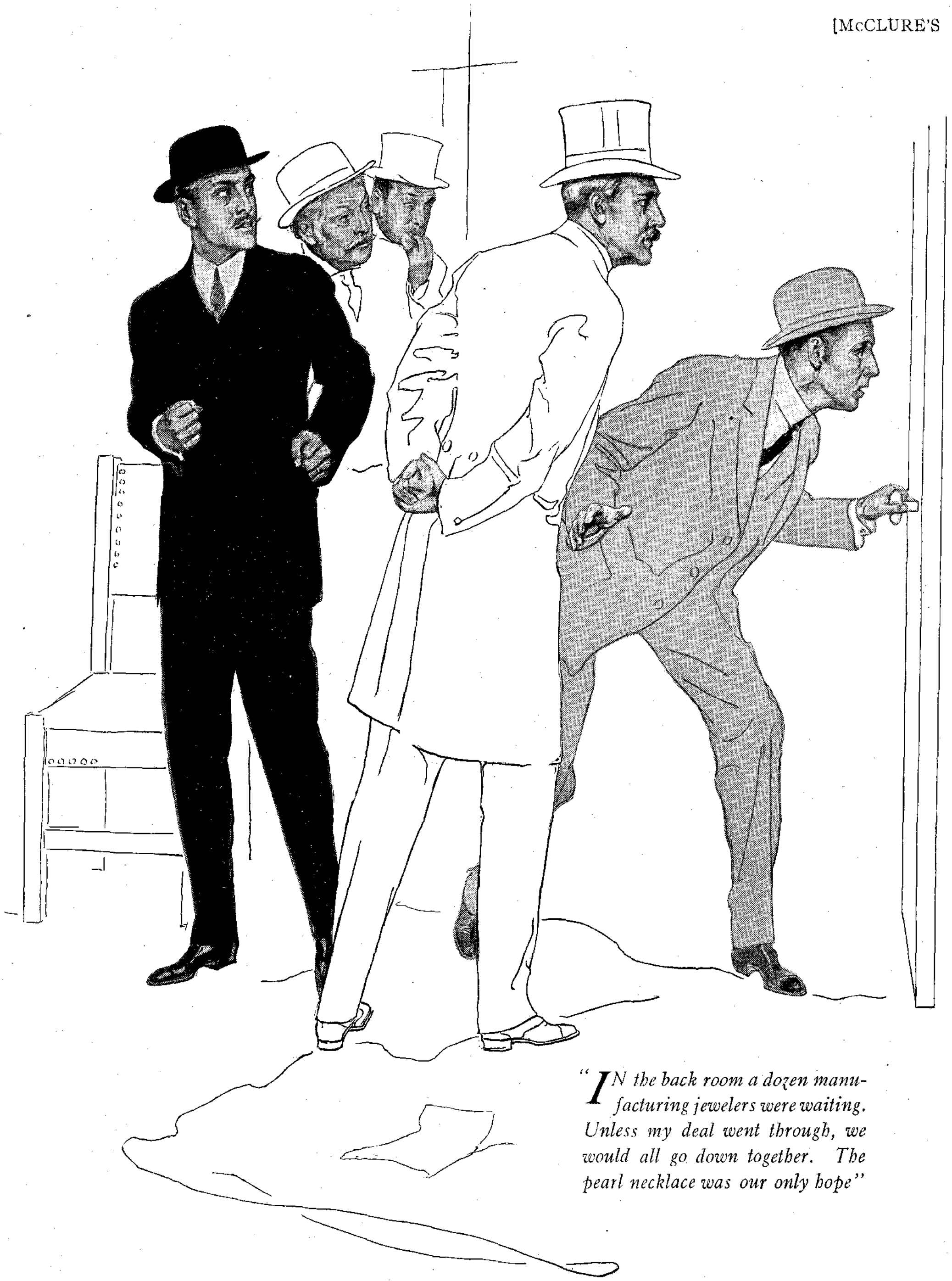
Bryan's Descent on the Millionaires

I often think of it, even now, with all the mountainous extravagance of to-day. We have climbed beyond all dreams of extravagance. Europe is nothing beside us. But there is still Asia.

However, I had different things to think of then. The panic of 1893 had come down on us, and my customer canceled his order for the necklace. I not only missed the $100,000 sale; I had the necklace on my hands. We broke it into eight pieces, and it took us two years to sell it.

Those were hard years. The Fifth Avenue jewelry business was being aimed more and more exclusively at the ultra-rich — which meant that it was a tremendously speculative venture. You got together hundreds of thousands and millions of dollars' worth of luxuries appealing to a very limited class; and when, all at once, something happened to that class, you were stranded with your luxuries. Besides carrying that fearful load, you were compelled to carry tens of thousands of dollars' worth of credit on your books — not for the great multimillionaires, but for their dependents or relatives, who had smaller funds; and you never knew when these people would pay.

Something happened to the multimillionaires in 1893, as everybody knows — especially the railroad millionaires, the class that had come to be our best customers. The struggles of



"*IN the back room a dozen manufacturing jewelers were waiting. Unless my deal went through, we would all go down together. The pearl necklace was our only hope*"

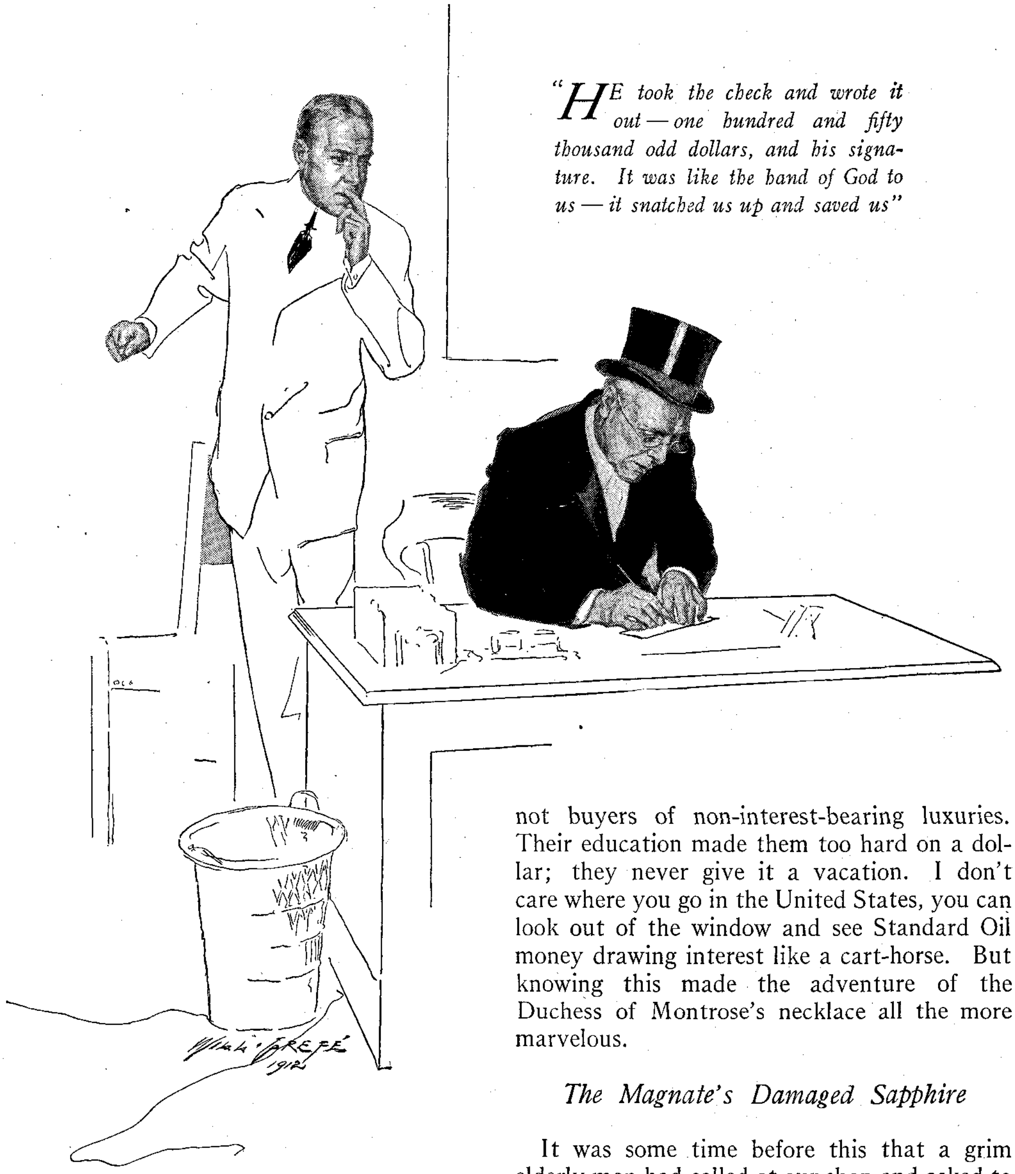
the American farmer at that time may have been more pathetic, but they were certainly not so violent as those of the dealer in Fifth Avenue luxuries.

From the panic of 1893, the sky grew darker and darker. In the summer of 1896 the climax came. Young Bryan came on, roaring like a great yellow wind storm from the West; and credit crumbled before him. Naturally, the jewelry business was one of the first places where the banks called in their loans. It seemed impossible that we should tide over the crisis. We couldn't have if it had not been for the Standard Oil magnate and the Duchess of Montrose's necklace.

The Busy Dollar of the Standard Oil

What rational man could have imagined such a thing? No one. It was a miracle — nothing more or less.

The Standard Oil crowd had the money, of



"*HE took the check and wrote it out — one hundred and fifty thousand odd dollars, and his signature. It was like the hand of God to us — it snatched us up and saved us*"

course. They were then, as now, the "ready-money millionaires." Panics are marked in their almanacs as feast-days. But who would expect them to buy jewelry?

We had done business with John D. Rockefeller. We had sold him a $500 piece of silver — a wine cooler, it was, made over into a lamp. It was a week's transaction; the entire Rockefeller family had to be recruited and brought in before it was complete. If jewels have gone into the Rockefeller family, it must be, I believe,— according to the old rumor,— as collateral for loans on a sixty per cent valuation, and not for decorative purposes.

All this is a matter of common knowledge. Everybody knows the Standard Oil people are not buyers of non-interest-bearing luxuries. Their education made them too hard on a dollar; they never give it a vacation. I don't care where you go in the United States, you can look out of the window and see Standard Oil money drawing interest like a cart-horse. But knowing this made the adventure of the Duchess of Montrose's necklace all the more marvelous.

The Magnate's Damaged Sapphire

It was some time before this that a grim elderly man had called at our shop and asked to see a member of the firm. I had never seen him before; but when he gave his name I was delighted. He was one of the greatest of the Standard Oil magnates.

He reached into his pocket, drew out a velvet box, and laid before me a pair of handsome sapphire ear-rings.

"I just got 'em in Europe," he said curtly. "Look at that."

Across one of the stones was a very noticeable black mark.

"I want a perfect stone to match the other. What'll it cost?" he said.

I picked up the spotted gem and took it from its setting. There was nothing the matter with it; it was perfect. The whole trouble was a bit of tarnish in the setting, caused by the salt air on the trip from Europe.

I passed the magnifying-glass to the customer, and let him see for himself.

"You don't want a new stone," I said. "All you need is to have us polish up the setting."

"By George!" he said. "You could have sold me another stone just as well as not."

He shook hands with me when he left.

"Two Yards of Pearls, Please"

One morning in the summer of 1896, when matters were at their worst, I looked up, and there was my gray multimillionaire.

"I want a pearl necklace," he said glibly. "Perfect pearls; sixty inches long; each pearl the same size; each to weigh sixteen grains."

It was an unusual order. Pearl necklaces were generally made of pearls in graded sizes — and only about twelve or fourteen inches long. This was not an ordinary pearl necklace; it was a chatelaine chain, and the Standard Oil man ordered it as definitely as if he were calling for a package of breakfast food at a grocery.

"There isn't anything like that in America," I said.

"No; I want you to go to Europe and buy it for me," said the Standard Oil man. "I'll give you $25,000 for doing it."

I was almost stunned; a carte blanche order — $125,000 or $150,000 at least — in such a time as that, when ordinary multimillionaires were hesitating to spend $5,000. It meant not only $25,000 for me; it meant a rearrangement of my credit for $125,000 or $150,000 — the safe tiding over of those terrible times.

"Very well," I said, as coolly as I could.

"When can you go?" he asked.

"To-morrow."

"Want any money?"

"No, thank you," I said. We bought our goods "on time" abroad. I knew I could get credit for the goods there, and apply his money on my American notes. Besides, it looked better not to take expenses from him.

"All right," said my multimillionaire. "I want it in just six weeks."

"Very well."

"And, remember, perfect pearls," he admonished, and went out.

The next morning I was on my way to Europe — wondering.

There were a number of reasons for surprise. It was not only likely to be the largest single sale made in America, but it marked a new era — the day of the dearest of all gems, the pearl. This had been a diamond country. Now the time of luxury had awaked, when diamond ornaments large enough were becoming too heavy to carry around. The pearl, four and five times as valuable, for its weight, was to take its place. The gem of European royalty was coming to America.

But that was not my chief cause for speculation on my way across. Why was this grim old business Machiavelli buying such an ornament? I knew something of him — a silent man who loved to go out on his yacht alone, and sit looking out to sea, planning, or even more to amuse himself with the furtive art of fishing. His tackle was the finest, his bait the most artfully selected; he sat all day — so popular stories ran — in silence, hunting a particular big fish. When he landed it, he snapped, "I got him!"— no more — and bore it home with him.

What did such a man want with a pearl necklace? It was about as appropriate to his disposition as orange blossoms on a locomotive engineer.

I had a partial explanation — from an acquaintance on the steamer. His nephew was to marry a Vanderbilt. I remembered it, when the man spoke of it. But that didn't quite explain the use of Standard Oil money in this way.

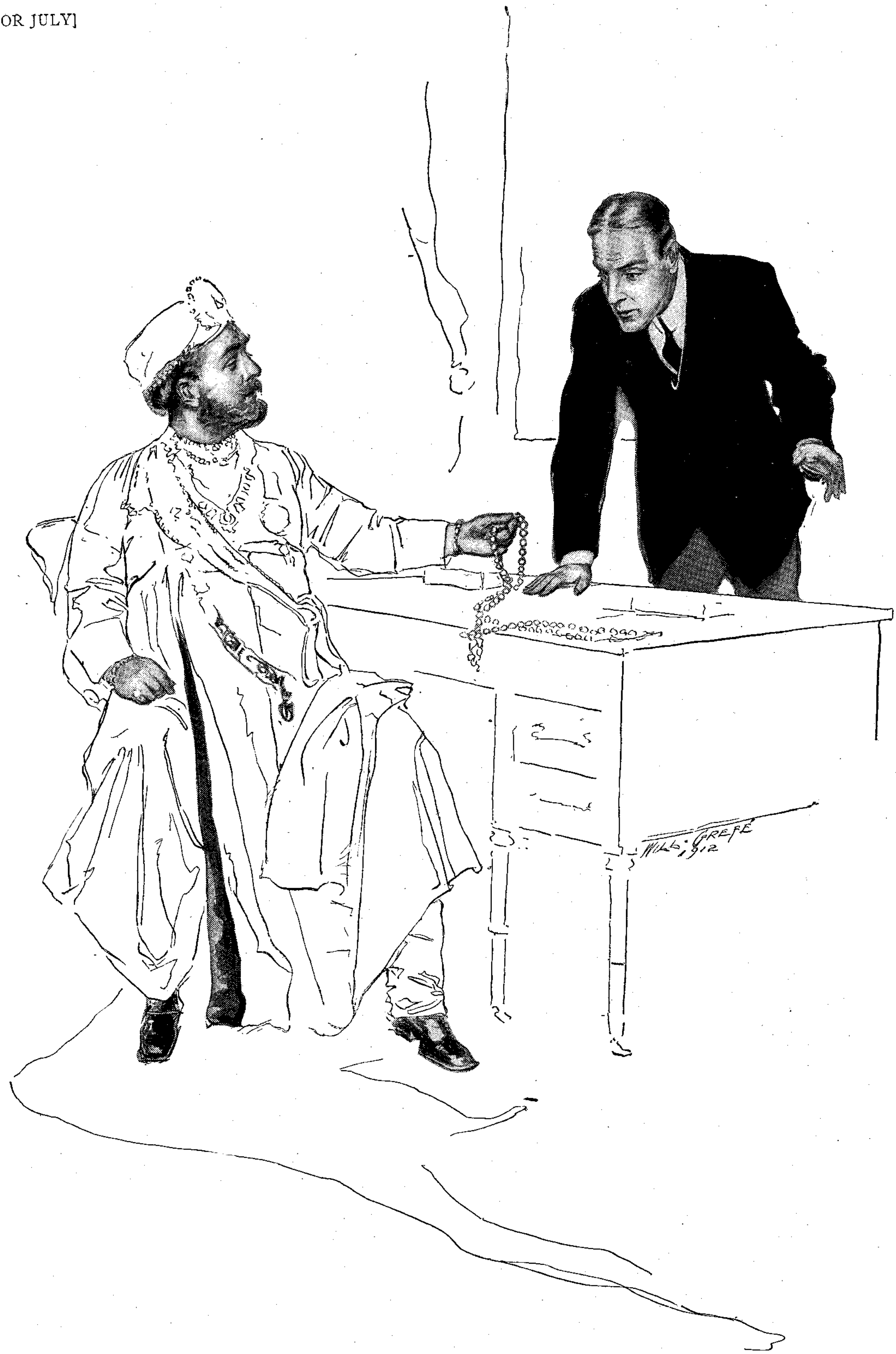
At any rate, such an order would be a tremendous thing to me — if I could put it through. But could I — in six weeks' time?

I Search Europe for Pearls

Big diamonds are one thing,— they are digging new ones out of the earth every day,— but these great pearls are found now very rarely; the grounds are fished too closely to allow them to grow. The supply is limited; they are old ones, mostly, found years ago. There had been a floating supply when the Astor string was sold in the '70's; now, twenty years afterward, they must be bought from the folk who had them. You bought them from the nobility in straitened circumstances, or from the pearl speculators of Europe, who stand and watch and catch them when, under some untoward stress of misfortune, they fall from titled necks.

I went, of course, direct to Paris. The gem shops were still in the Palais Royal then — tiny boxes of stores, half taken up by show windows, where the great jewels were set out: bait for the Americans and Brazilians and the other barbaric spenders of money.

One after another, I ransacked the shops. There was nothing there. I saw the syndicate of jewelers who buy and hold the big pieces. They had nothing. If it had been only a big pearl necklace, it might have been possible, but this order was eccentric. Five feet of per-


Will Grefé, 1912

"THE languid Rajah laughed aloud — then took from his neck an emerald necklace beside which my $100,000 string looked pathetic"

fect sixteen-grain pearls. These crazy Americans — what did they expect? No one had it, and it couldn't be assembled.

My six weeks were flying. I telegraphed Amsterdam and Vienna, on a chance. Nothing! I tried St. Petersburg — the Russian nobility are great holders of big pearls, and great gamblers. But the dealers could find nothing.

I was worried, and blue. Cables from home grew worse and worse. The Bryan raid was absolutely ruining business on Fifth Avenue. Two thirds of my six weeks were gone, and I despaired of getting anything. I gave up, finally, and drifted back to England to take the steamer home, and stopped at London.

There was nothing to be expected in London. It is a poor pearl market. You hear a great deal about the pearls of the English aristocracy; but, as a matter of fact, they don't compare with the pearl necklaces on the Continent. The English are less particular about the quality of their pearls, for one thing.

In London, with two days on my hands, I wandered in a half-hearted way from one small jeweler to another. There was no sign of my pearls.

The Necklace of the Duchess

There was a little store where I had traded in the past, and occasionally found a fine diamond. I drifted in there, finally, to talk with the proprietor.

"Where is Mr. X?" I asked.

"He's dead," said the man at the counter. "Six months ago."

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that," I said. "Who is running this store now?"

"I am."

"I am over here," I said — for the hundred and first time — "looking for pearls — sixteen-grain pearls. You haven't any, have you?"

"Yes," said the dealer; "I have too many of them."

"You have?" I cried.

"But not loose, unfortunately," said the man. "They must be sold as a lot."

"What is the lot?"

"It is a pearl necklace," said the gentleman, while my eyes almost sprang from their sockets, "sixty inches long, every pearl the same size, each one of them sixteen grains in weight."

He was repeating my order like a formula!

"You must know the piece," he said. "It is the Duchess of Montrose's necklace."

"No," I said, "I don't know it."

"It's an elephant," he said sadly. "It's eating its head off in interest on the hands of the people."

"Who owns it?" I asked.

"It belongs to Mr. X's daughters. It's the biggest item of their father's estate."

"What do they want for it?" I asked.

"They value it," said the man, "at £23,000."

The Duchess, the Sporting Duchess of Montrose, it seemed, had recently died; and at her death her pearl necklace had gone on the market. A syndicate of jewelry speculators had taken it, and from them it had come to Mr. X.

The jeweler took out the necklace and showed it to me. It was a beautiful thing, exactly what I wanted, except that a few of the pearls were not perfect. My customer wanted a necklace of perfect pearls. I looked the Duchess' necklace over carefully. I would have to have eleven new pearls. I could get them in just one place — Paris. My boat landed the day after the next at Havre. "It is not the property of the firm," the gem-dealer was saying. "It belongs to the three daughters of Mr. X. You will have to see them before I can let you have it."

My heart sank. Supposing they lived in the country? It would be a scratch at best to go to Paris, buy the extra pearls, and catch that boat. "Where are they?" I asked him. Fortunately, they were all in London. We called a hansom-cab and started out together to find them. We had luck. All three were at home. But then there was another hitch. Two were willing to sell, but the third refused to do so until she had consulted her fiancé.

Where was he?

Writing Drafts All Night

He was away across London — a clerk in a bank in the City. It took me two full hours to locate him and bring him to the gem store. And there, finally, we made a trade. They finally accepted £22,000 for it, and agreed, according to custom, to accept drafts for it. Then I realized that I was in more trouble. It was now eight o'clock at night. The banks were all closed, and with them the chance to get the official stamped paper required in England for making drafts.

Here was a nice thing. I must positively go to Paris. If my customer had a necklace with imperfect pearls, he would throw it back on my hands. And now I was held up after a month's work for the lack of a piece of paper to write a draft on. The game was constantly running against me.

Then I remembered. In every hotel you can get paper for drafts, but good only up to fifty pounds. So we started out in the cab again, and rounded up from the London hotels a supply of paper to write my drafts on. We hurried back again, and I made up £22,000 worth of drafts. There were hundreds of them, literally, and it took me and an assistant nearly all night to write them. I just barely had time to tumble, half alive, on the morning train for Paris.

In the morning of the next day I was in the gem shop of the Rue de la Paix; by noon I had bought my eleven pearls. I left immediately by the train for Havre, and by afternoon I was sailing home for America with my necklace. It had cost me a little over $125,000.

The trip home was depressing. Worry about the financial situation pursued me all the way. My father, who was at the head of the business, met me at the pier. I landed the day before Bryan was to make his famous speech in Madison Square Garden. It was the black center of the financial storm. The stock market was jumping up and down like a barometer before a typhoon. Money went to 140 per cent on Wall Street; there simply wasn't any to be had.

"We're ruined," said my father. "The banks refuse to renew our loan. We are overdrawn $16,000 this minute."

Saved by a String of Pearls

The pearl necklace was our only hope. We drove up to the store together in silence. There was a group of small manufacturing jewelers there, huddled in the back room. The end of the world had come in the jewelry trade, and Byran was the angel Gabriel. The banks had closed down on the jewelry business, and these men were waiting for me to see whether we couldn't help them out with loans of anywhere from $100 to $500 apiece to meet their pay-rolls. We told them we couldn't help them, anyway, that day; they might come to-morrow.

The emerald necklace and the panic of 1893 came constantly to my mind. Suppose this multimillionaire was tied up in the stock market, as the other one had been?

Or supposing even he was out of town. It was the last of August — he might very well be. And one more day without cash — that would finish the business, our whole business life. If we didn't get that money the next day it would be too late.

I wrote my multimillionaire a letter asking him to come in the next day to see the pearls. At ten o'clock he was there. And there, in the back room, were the manufacturing jewelers waiting — a dozen or fifteen of them. If my deal went through we could help them out; if not, we would all go down together.

I took my customer into the private office and brought out the string. He took it and went over it, scanning the pearls one by one. This took fully half an hour. Finally he said: "That's all right, I guess; what has it cost me?"

With the duty and my commission, the necklace stood him over $150,000. He said he was well satisfied.

He reached into his pocket and fumbled about a minute.

"It's too bad; I left my check-book," he said. I caught my breath. There was a concerted sigh from the back room.

"Have you a check on the Chemical National?" he said.

"No, but I'll send for one," I said quickly. "I've got one," I added, "on the Fifth Avenue Bank."

"Oh, that's all right, I guess," said my multimillionaire. He took a little memorandum book out of his pocket. "Yes, that's all right; I've got it there," he said.

Apparently he had that much on deposit in almost any bank you could name in New York.

He took the Fifth Avenue check and wrote it out, one hundred and fifty thousand odd dollars, and his signature — the signature of the ready-money multimillionaire. What difference where money rates had gone? That was good. It was like the hand of God to us — it snatched us up and saved us.

The Standard Oil man handed me the check, and took the velvet box, with its pearls, and slipped it into the side pocket of his coat.

He marched out with his $150,000 present in his pocket. I stood there with the $150,000 ready money in my hand. And the small manufacturing jewelers came out of the back room and stood around me, smiling expectantly.

You remember the wedding, maybe. Do you remember that other development right after that — that unheralded thing, just one name in the railroad manuals?

One of the silent, ready-money multimillionaires had gone into the directorate of the great Vanderbilt railroad — which more and more, as time went on, has come under their hand. Everybody knows now what that meant. It was a great turning-point in the great secret forces that make the real history of this country.

Every time I think of it, I see the old gray, silent fisherman — his carefully planned approach, his shining pole, his carefully chosen bait.

A pretty small bait, after all — a $150,000 pearl necklace for a $150,000,000 railroad!

"THE MAN WHO NEVER BOUGHT JEWELRY," THE SECOND ARTICLE OF THIS SERIES, WILL APPEAR IN AUGUST

McCLURE'S NEW SERIES OF ADVENTURE STORIES

TWO ON A MOUNTAIN

BY

EDITH RONALD MIRRIELEES

ILLUSTRATIONS BY P. V. E. IVORY

A man asks a woman to marry him, and she refuses. He entraps her by a stratagem and carries her off to a remote cabin in the mountains, beyond the reach of civilization. A blizzard shuts the two in for the winter. This is the situation with which Miss Mirrielees opens the following story — a wonderful study in feminine psychology.

AS she approached the hollow between the log schoolhouse and the ranch, Miss Hardiman, her eyes upon her companion's face, quickened her steps and laid capable hold upon the laggard conversation.

"And this week ends it. It doesn't seem possible a whole summer term's over. You know, I'm awfully grateful, Emmett, for the way you've kept me from being lonely all summer. I won't forget ——"

"You needn't say good-by yet; you're not rid of me," the man said thickly.

He had been leading his horse by the bridle as they walked. He dropped the bridle now and stood in front of her. The hand he laid upon her arm burned hot through the thin sleeve of her shirtwaist.

"It's no good! I've asked you before, but I'm going to ask you again. Once and for all, Elise, will you marry me?"

"No, I won't," said Miss Hardiman promptly. "You're silly, Emmett. I haven't known you long enough, for one thing. And then — I'm sorry — I'm awfully sorry — but you're not enough — you're too — you're the kind of man I'd want for a good friend. If you'd just be friends ——"

The man gathered up his reins from the dust and climbed to the saddle. The horse wheeled so suddenly at his savage tug that Miss Hardiman, in the road, barely escaped its heels.

"Emmett!" she called, in a sudden cry of fear; but, if he heard, he paid no attention — although she stood watching till the horse was out of sight.

She drew in a breath of relief as it vanished. "He'll be all right," she comforted herself. "If he rides that way, he'll be too tired to think by the time he gets to town."

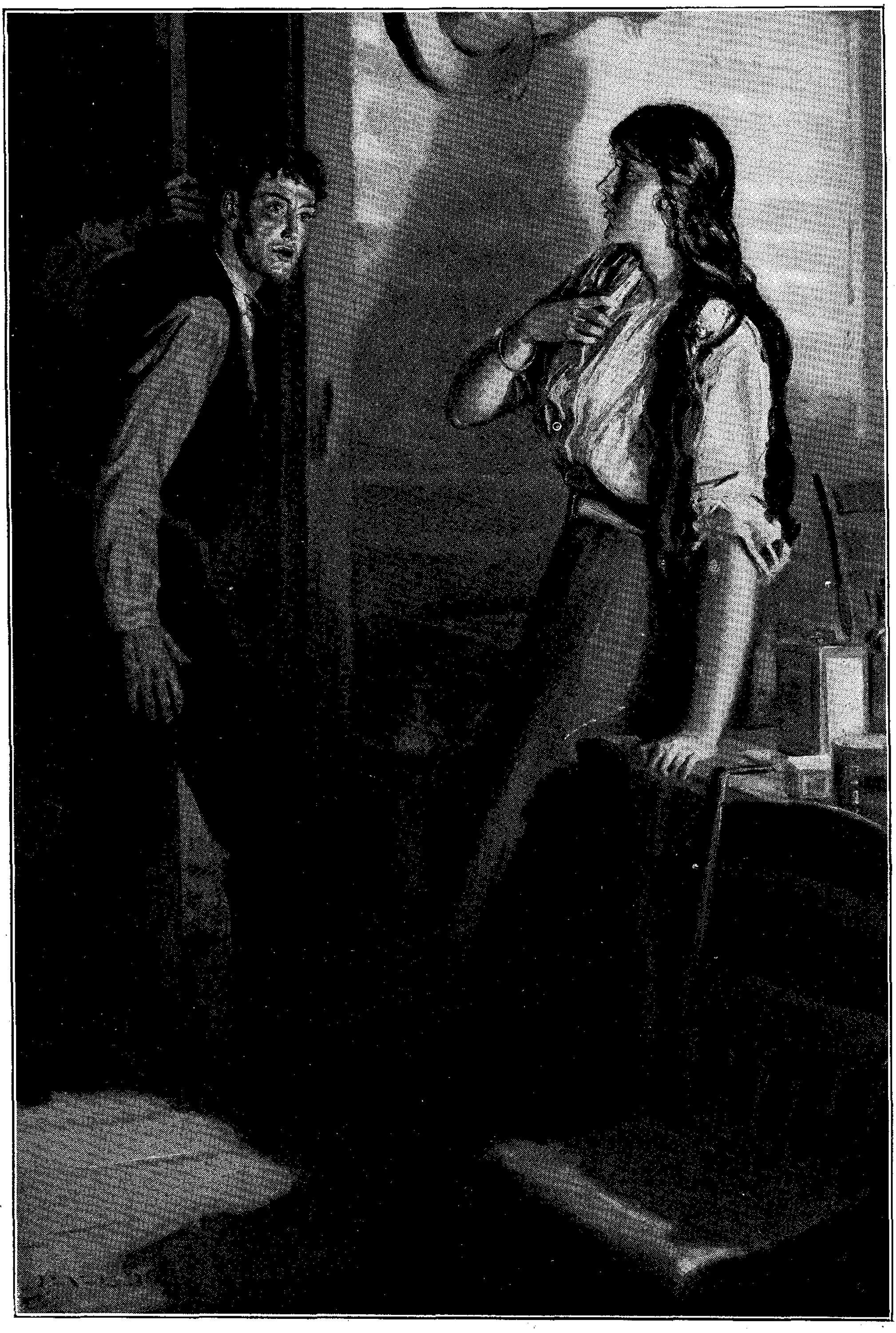
None the less, she went forward very slowly toward her boarding-place, with feet dragging. Herself a product of the ranch country, she could picture with the painful vividness of knowledge the rider's course and his arrival — the dreary corrugated-iron store that was his working-place, the tiny mountain town with its paucity of amusements, its dearth of companionship. In such a place a man might brood himself into despair. She ached with pity at the thought of it.

Her final days of teaching passed heavily in a fog of regret. She was therefore disproportionately relieved when, on the last day, an hour after dismissal, she looked up, at the sound of wheels, to see Emmett at the door. Before proposing had become his habit, it had been agreed that, at the end of the term, he should convey her and her possessions to the railroad. He reminded her of the agreement now.

"I remember," Miss Hardiman confirmed him. "I'm all ready. Only, there's one thing. If you're going to say anything, I'd sooner wait and go in to-morrow with Mrs. Michaels. You've got to promise."

The man flushed heavily. "I promise," he said, his eyes avoiding hers.

He interpreted his promise literally during their drive from the schoolhouse to the Michaels ranch. He was still silent as he roped her trunk upon the back of the buckboard and waited for the completion of her adieux. Seated beside him, studying surreptitiously his drawn face, the girl felt suddenly a thrill of uneasiness. It was borne in upon her that the man at her side — the granite look, the hot eyes, the tense line of chin and shoulder — was a man quite strange to her experience. Involuntarily she turned her glance away from him, as though to look were indecent.



"'YOU'VE PICKED MY LIFE UP AND BROKEN IT! IT'S SPOILED. AND YOU'VE SPOILED YOUR OWN, TOO. DO YOU SEE THAT?'"

They had driven in this way for twenty minutes, when Emmett pulled heavily upon the right-hand rein.

"Gully washed out," he explained.

The horses, responding to his pull, turned from the road across the sage-brush prairie. A vague familiarity with the landscape set the girl frowning. She touched her companion's arm.

"This won't take us to town; this is a wood road." A mounting fear swept over her. She struggled to her feet. "This takes us up into the foot-hills. I won't go on this road; I'll get out first. I'll ——"

"Sit down!" said the driver, in a sudden shout.

He cut at the horses, threw free the reins, and caught at her; and, as she felt his arms about her, Miss Hardiman made the one fatal error of her whole life — she fainted.

When sense returned, she was seated on the floor of the buckboard, her body propped between her captor's knees. It had been sunset when they left the ranch; it was dusk now, shading toward dark. The horses were toiling heavily on a rising road. After a moment she spoke — soothingly, as to a sick child:

"I feel better now; I guess I'll get up on the seat."

Her captor interposed no objection; he even put out his hand to aid her rising. She acknowledged the aid scrupulously.

"Thank you. Hadn't we better turn back now? I don't believe I feel well enough to go much farther. And, Emmett, I've been thinking about what you said — about your asking me —" Her voice shook; she stopped. Not will and fear combined could force into the words a semblance of sincerity.

And at once she was aware that neither her speech nor her silence touched the man beside her. Against the gray sky-line she could see his face, rapt, brooding, far withdrawn. She clenched her hands about his arm, shaking it.

"Emmett, listen! You've got to get me back before I'm missed. You've got to! If they found out what you'd done, they'd lynch you! You know they would. Why, that man who only frightened O'Donnell's wife ——"

He turned his head at that and looked at her, and she was silent, her hands pressed against her face to shut out the look.

It began to rain after it was fairly dark, the rain changing to snow as they ascended. Through the snow they climbed interminably. It was long after midnight before the horses emerged upon a clearing. In the middle of the clearing a blot of shadow proclaimed a building. Silent still, the man dismounted and led the way, his victim stumbling after him. Inside the house, he struck a match and lighted a lamp standing ready on the table. The cabin was of logs, rudely chinked, a clapboard partition dividing it. In the room in which they stood was a cook-stove, a bunk-bed, and a table. Upon the table and on the floor beside it were piled innumerable packages — boxes of canned goods, slabs of bacon. As the sinister meaning of their presence swept over the girl, an insanity of fear laid hold of her. She flung up her hands, crying aloud:

"You meant to come! You planned it!"

The black rectangle of a doorway in the partition was close beside her. She sprang through it and braced her body against the door, holding it with a strength that set the whole crazy structure to creaking. If the man had tried to follow, she would perhaps have died of terror. He did not try. Instead, she heard him moving about in the outer room, kindling a fire, tearing the paper wrappings from parcels. The partition reached only part way to the ceiling. Over it came light, and presently grateful warmth and the still more grateful smell of cooking food. When the whole house was redolent of frying bacon, he spoke:

"I've something cooked. May I bring you some?"

There was no answer, and he approached the door and tried it gently. Finding it fast, he went away again.

She was calmer after that; but she still lay huddled against her barricade, hands and body pressed against it. Lying so, she must have drowsed at last, for suddenly, from a window on the farther side of the room, a somber light proclaimed day. She got up, stiff and shaking, and stood for a little, looking out over the clearing. Then, taking courage of her necessity, she opened the door and entered the outer room.

Emmett was sitting in one of the two chairs the room afforded, his head and arms upon the table. He was asleep. Tiptoeing, the girl passed him and gained the threshold. She hesitated there, the closed door at her back, daunted, in spite of herself, by the white loneliness around her. Over the whole clearing lay a mask of snow. The buckboard, a rod beyond the cabin, was a thing uncouth and strange in its snow cover; the harness was a mound of snow beside it. Horses there were none.

"It's on foot, then," she decided desperately. She thought with regret of the food she had refused earlier; but the fear of return was stronger than hunger.

"I'd rather starve," she told herself. "I'd rather die than look at him again!"

It was three hours later when she reëntered the clearing. In the interval she had tried twenty descents from her prison. Shale rock, cut banks, impenetrable underbrush — she had attempted each in turn. When she saw again the sullen bulk of the log house, she knew with finality that the choice lay between return and death; and, with a bitterness scarcely less than death, she chose return.

Her captor was sleeping still. She scarcely noticed him as she entered. She went straight to the stove, filled it with chips and kindled them, and spread her blue hands above the flame. There were some dried pieces of bacon in a pan on the back of the stove. She crowded them down greedily with ravenous relish. Then, fed and partly warmed, she dragged a chair close to the heat, and sat bent above it, wide-eyed and weary, waiting for the man to wake.

It was dusk before he stirred. A preliminary groan presaged his movement. There followed a sudden intake of the breath, a contraction of the muscles, and he sat upright. The room was almost dark, but from the cracks of the stove came light enough to show the girl seated beside it. He got to his feet and came toward her.

"I thought I dreamed it; I thought ——"

"You'd best keep away," the girl said clearly.

Even through the dimness she could see the trouble in his face — helpless bewilderment, helpless acquiescence. It was as if only his senses had awakened, his brain still slumbering. He stood wavering for a moment; then he turned back and resumed his seat.

"Whatever you say," he agreed indistinctly.

The little homely, unimpassioned phrase reassured her. She got to her feet and lighted the lamp. The light flickering between them, she bent forward toward him, every point of her cruel exhaustion — her disarranged hair, her torn dress — emphasized in the glare. She did not speak, but beneath her look the blood crept up into the man's bewildered face and his eyes fell.

"I don't—understand—" he began. "I ——"

It needed only the sound of his voice. "'Understand'! Can't you see what you've done? Look at me! Look at this place!" She sprang across the room and opened the door. "Look outside! The snow's burying us. And oh — the months —" She thrust the door shut, wailing.

Emmett crossed the floor unsteadily and opened it again. He was still like a man half wakened or partly recovered from some powerful drug.

"It's not deep yet; I can get you down. As soon as it gets light ——"

She shook her head. "God couldn't get us down without skis. Oh, I know these mountains! It wasn't for any hope of that. But I want you to see what you've done. You've picked my life up and broken it! It's spoiled. And you've spoiled your own, too. Do you see that? If we do get down, it will be all the worse for you. When they find out ——"

"I thought of that," he acquiesced; "but I thought if I could just get you away — just once have you where you'd listen to me ——"

"Listen to you! I'm likely to listen! But you can listen to me. You were asleep when I came in. I could have killed you. And I mean to do it. You'll have to sleep again, and when you do — You don't care!"

"No," he acknowledged wretchedly.

With the last ounce of energy in her, she leaned toward him and scanned his face. Then, with a sigh, she turned back to her chair by the stove.

"The thing's done. But I want to know this. You're sorry — you *are* sorry?"

"I wouldn't have hurt you ——"

She cut him short. "I didn't ask you that. See what you've done. You've ended your life! You've done what you'll die for as surely as if it was proved murder. Now, then, knowing that, knowing it's just death, do you wish ——"

"No!" said the lover.

She nodded, her eyes upon him. "Yes, that's true. But why ——"

"I wouldn't have done it if I'd been in my senses," the man said sullenly. "I'd have been too sorry for you. But, since I did, I'm glad! Just being here, just seeing you ——"

"Oh, don't begin that!" said the girl wearily. She dragged her tired body toward the door of the inner room.

She slept heavily that night and late into the next day. When at last she emerged, Emmett, with a face of chalk, sat crouched against the open oven door. He shook and shuddered, even in the continuous blast of its heat.

"Sick?" the girl asked shortly.

He wavered to his feet. "It don't matter. I was getting some breakfast ——"

"I'll get my own," she answered shortly.

She raked out coals to the hearth of the stove, and cooked some bacon for herself. Once she glanced from her repast to her fellow prisoner, shaking in his chair; but the impulse that moved her was not strong enough to come to speech, and she finished her meal in silence.

She was still so wholly weary that, fed and warmed, sleep came upon her again, and she drowsed. It was mid-afternoon before there came the consciousness of a sound, suppressed but constantly repeated — the gasping, stertorous breathing of one who labored to swallow sobs. She tried to close her eyes again; but the lids refused their office, and she at last got reluctantly to her feet.

"What's wrong, Emmett?" she demanded. "What's the matter with you?"

The answer flashed through her mind like a sudden triumph: "*Now* he is sorry. Now he would go back."

"I'm — sick." He swallowed hard on the word. "I'm no good. And I meant to do everything! I meant to make it — like heaven."

"It *looks* like heaven," the girl commented.

There were other comments ready to follow, but she silenced them in very shame. Emmett had sunk down again in his chair after the momentary effort of speech. She went to him, took his hand capably in hers, and laid her fingers on his wrist.

"You've got fever. You'd better go over to the bunk there and lie down."

She stood watching while he essayed to gain his feet; then, with an inarticulate sound, she drew his arm across her shoulders.

"Now, then! Careful, you're almost there." Involuntarily her hand went out to ease his descent to the bed. "Go to sleep, if you can," she commanded, not unkindly, and went back to her place by the fire.

Seated there, she tried to whip her anger again into action.

"And now I can wait on him! He's stranded us here, and he's not ashamed to get sick. He wouldn't be ashamed to *die!*"

But anger was slow of response. Thoughts too big for anger, ponderous, impersonal almost, laid hold upon her. Bent forward, staring, she traced the course of them.

"He's sick — but it wasn't being sick made him want to do it. It only let him loose to follow what he wanted. Man-fashion! Want a thing and take it, and leave us"— for the moment she was representative of all women — "leave us to pay for it. We always pay! We can't help paying, any more than they can help ——"

The thought cut itself off unworded, but she could feel the chill shock of it against her just resentment. She got to her feet, and began to pace up and down the room. The man upon the bed had lain so still that she had fancied him asleep. Now, at her movement, he spoke: "Elise — there's something I want to say."

It was only late afternoon outside, but the cabin was scantily furnished with windows. She lighted the lamp and came closer to the bed. Emmett had risen upon his elbow, his head propped upon his hand. He looked gaunt and gray-faced and unnaturally big in the light.

"And grown up," the girl noted —"grown up, where he used to be only big." Aloud, "Get any sleep?" she questioned, holding her voice level.

He shook his head. "Not yet. What I wanted to say was this. If I die ——"

"You've nothing but a bad cold."

He seemed not to hear. "If I die, you're not to give up hope. Somehow you're to get out. And, whether I live or die,"— he had spoken so far with his eyes upon her; now his eyes fell and his free hand shifted on the blanket,—"whether I get well or not, I'll never — hurt you. You needn't be afraid. You're as safe ——"

"Of course I'm safe! I don't know what you mean," she denied — and crimsoned, recollecting her fears of the day before. Looking at him, she knew as surely as by direct revelation that his imperious moment was gone forever. Abruptly as one might unclasp the fastening of a cape, she let fall her manner of offense. She went over close to the bed.

"Lie down, Emmett. Warm enough? Want anything to eat?"

"No," said the man, breathing hard. "No." He dropped back recumbent. "You oughtn't to wait on me. I didn't mean for you to do anything. I meant ——"

"I know what you meant," the girl interposed. She spoke gravely, finally. "I know exactly what you meant. If we live to get down, I hope and pray you'll pay for it. But, so long as we can't get down, so long as we're up here, we two ——"

She moved her chair forward, and sat down, her hands in her lap, patience in every line of her.

"Elise — I am sorry," said the man.

She began to sob softly. "Oh, I'm so sorry! I'm so sorry! You'd been so good to me, Emmett. And now, no matter what happens — whether we die here or whether we get safe out — Oh, listen! Oh, my God!"

She was on her feet, her face swept blank by terror and unbelief.

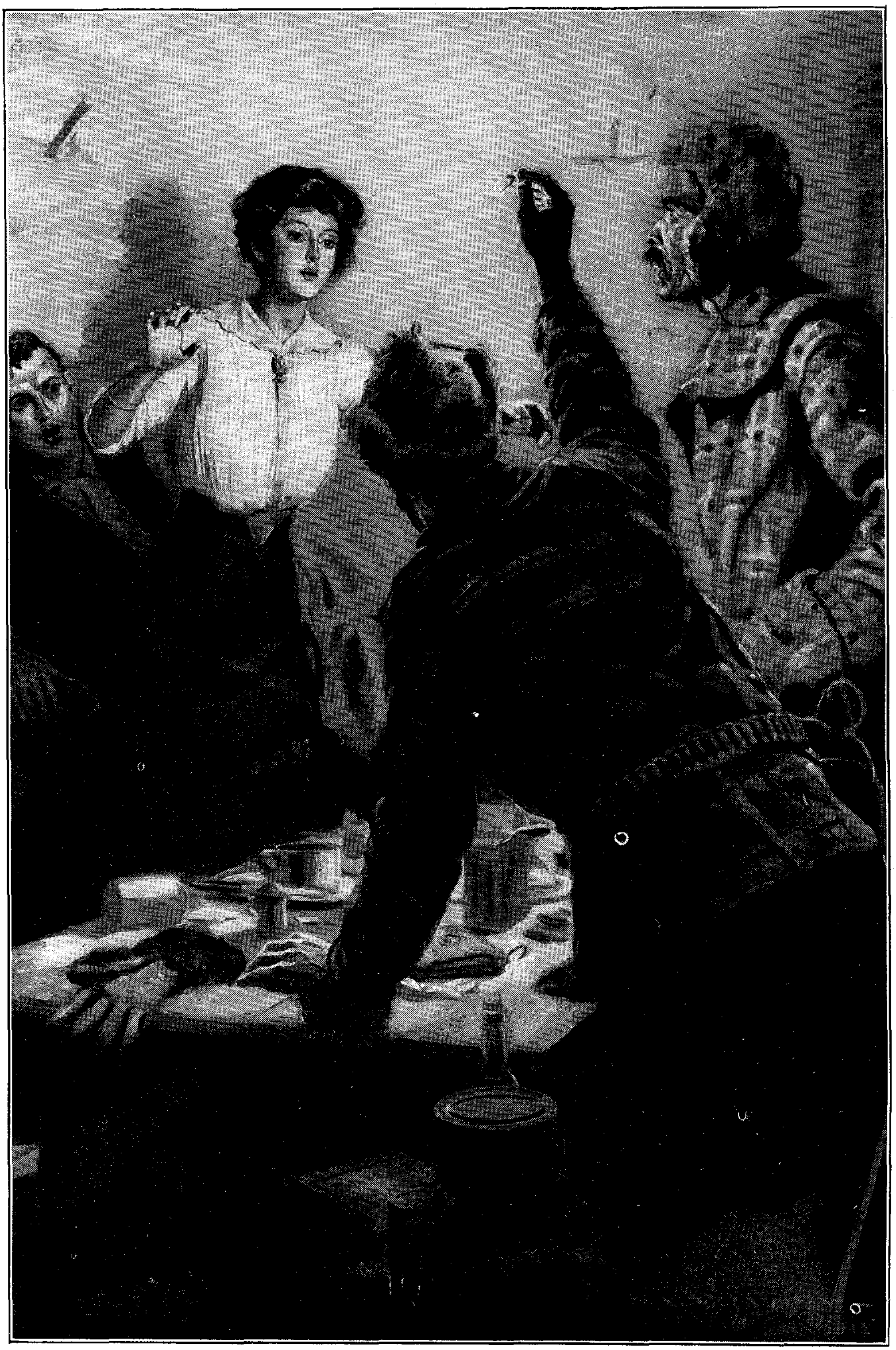
And, indeed, the interruption was a thing unbelievable. Outside were only dusk and stretch of snow. Outside were forests, drifts impenetrable, passages blocked shoulder-high. And yet, across the blockade rang the sound of human voices.

A moment later there was no mistaking them — a man's voice shouting hearty, oath-filled encouragements to some remote companion, and a distant, echo-sounding voice answering.

Miss Hardiman went to the window. By an instinct, she first leaned across the table and extinguished the lamp.

"Men on skis," she reported. "Two of them. Coming down." The shaking of her voice chopped off the sentences.

She could not see her companion's face, only the gaunt, tense outline of him as he leaned forward, listening. She left the window and



"'OH, THANK GOD YOU'VE COME! OH, TAKE US DOWN—HELP US TO GET DOWN'" came back blindly to the middle of the room. The table intercepted her progress; she crumpled down upon her knees beside it, her head on her hands.

The two voices were so near, at last, that the listeners could hear the creak of snow under their skis, the labored panting of one of them, as, on the door-stone, they freed their feet for entrance. Next a hand swept across the surface of the door and found the latch. A gray rectangle of light opened in the room.

"You must get up!" the girl was urging furiously upon her chained body. "You must say something!" And through her panic there ran a curious thread of speculation. "I've got to choose now. I've got to end things now, or never end them!"

The men were inside the room. One of them stumbled against the table. She heard the crackle of a match swept across its pine top — and suddenly she was on her feet, unchained, clamorous with speech:

"Oh, thank God you've come! Oh, take us down! Take us down — help us to get down!"

They fell back like men confronted by an apparition. The widening circle of the light took in Emmett, half risen, and "Thompson!" cried the holder of the match, with an oath of recognition to follow. A moment later he had recognized Miss Hardiman too.

For as long as it took to light a fresh match and apply its sputtering flame to the lamp-wick, stupefaction held him. In the clearer light he nodded apologetically, first to the girl, then to her companion, smiling at them and backing toward his mate on the threshold.

"We hadn't heard. We got a mine up the peak a ways, and we was just gettin' down ——"

"You're not *going?*" the girl cried out.

"There's a cabin down the trail a piece. We can make it, all right. It ain't dark enough ——"

She felt her knees weaken under her. How much to say, what to betray, what to hold back? And suddenly, through the paralysis of her will, she knew that Emmett was speaking:

"Can you take her down, Jensen? You've got to. I made her come ——"

The voice was strange to her. She glanced across at him. His look was that of a man facing the noose.

"And yet," it flashed through her mind, "yet he says it. He knows it's like suicide ——"

Jensen had come a step nearer to her. She turned her eyes to him — and drew back. It was instanter danger than she had thought. The astonishment of his face was struck across by heavier passions — readiness for rage, readiness for vile suspicion. For the first time he looked directly at her.

"What's the matter up here? If he's ——"

"The matter?" echoed the girl.

All at once certainty flowed through her. She crossed the room to the bed. The bewildered, suspecting eyes of the two strangers upon her, she passed an arm around the invalid's shoulders and drew him over against her.

"He's sick," she explained. "We got the wrong road, and the exposure and everything — better shut the door; it makes a draft. And if he'll be quiet while I get you something to eat ——"

But she could not instantly detach herself. The sick man's hands clung to her. His arms, his raised face, tremulous, incredulous, adoring, implored her nearness. She bent over him to catch his words.

"Elise — they'll think ——"

"He's worried for fear you won't understand," the listener interpreted aloud. "He's afraid you don't know we're engaged. If you'll make yourselves comfortable, I guess I'll stay here till he's asleep." She sat down on the edge of the bunk and drew the sufferer's head into her lap.

For minutes she sat there, her hand moving across his forehead with a monotonous, mechanical stroking. On the farther side of the room the intruders tiptoed about the stove, awed and uneasy. Beneath her touch the sick man stirred and shuddered and made as though he would draw himself away. Twice he tried to speak before his whisper became articulate.

"You mustn't. I was crazy to let you do it. You'll be sorry ——"

"I couldn't do the other thing," the girl owned, whispering too. "I *couldn't.*" A rush of tears threatened speech. Without warning, she laid her hot cheek to his forehead. "When I thought about it — If you're crazy, I know just how crazy you can be; I'm sure of you now. And — and being married's a long business, Emmett. I guess I'd soonest risk it with you."

THE NEWEST AND MOST INTERESTING HERO OF DETECTIVE FICTION IS ***THE INDUSTRIOUS CHEVALIER*** *— A DARING AND FASCINATING GENTLEMAN THIEF WHOSE RAIDS ON LONDON DRAWING-ROOMS ARE THE TERROR AND DISTRACTION OF SCOTLAND YARD.*

THE AUTHOR IS SQUIRE SPRIGGE — EDITOR OF THE WORLD-FAMOUS LONDON "LANCET."

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THE AFTER HOUSE

A Story of Love, Mystery, and a Private Yacht

BY

MARY ROBERTS RINEHART

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAY WILSON PRESTON

Begun in June.—Ralph Leslie, a young medical graduate just recovering from an attack of typhoid, decides to support himself through his convalescence by shipping as a common hand on the private yacht "Ella," which Marshall Turner, a rich and dissipated ship-owner, is taking on a southern pleasure cruise. In Turner's party are his wife, his young sister-in-law, Elsa Lee, Mrs. Johns, a divorcée, and a Mr. Vail. Things go badly from the start. Turner drinks constantly, quarrels with the captain, and accuses Vail of flirting with his wife. The second mate is lost overboard. Mrs. Johns, frightened by Turner's insane irritability, asks Leslie, whom she recognizes as a man of her own class, to sleep in the after house, within call. On the night of August 12 Leslie wakes suddenly and finds his door locked on the outside. As he forces it open, he hears a woman scream. He goes to Vail's room, and finds him dead, almost cut to pieces with an ax.

CHAPTER VI

THE match burnt out, and I dropped it. I remember mechanically extinguishing the glowing end with my heel, and then straightening to such a sense of horror as I have never felt before or since. I groped for the door; I wanted air, space, the freedom from lurking death of the open deck.

I had been sleeping with my revolver beside me on the pantry floor. Somehow or other I got back there and found it. I made an attempt to find the switch for the cabin lights, and, failing, revolver in hand, I ran into the chart-room and up the after companionway. Charlie Jones was at the wheel, and by the light of a lantern I saw that he was bending to the right, peering in at the chart-room window. He turned when he heard me.

"What's wrong?" he asked. "I heard a yell a minute ago. Turner on the rampage?" He saw my revolver then, and, letting go the wheel, threw up both his hands. "Turn that gun away, you fool!"

I could hardly speak. I lowered the revolver and gasped: "Call the captain! Vail's been murdered!"

"Good God!" he said. "Who did it?" He had taken the wheel again, and was bringing the ship back to her course. I was turning sick and dizzy, and I clutched at the railing of the companionway.

"I don't know. Where's the captain?"

"The mate's around." He raised his voice. "Mr. Singleton!" he called.

There was no time to lose, I felt. My nausea had left me. I ran around the after house toward the bridge, where I could dimly see Singleton looking in my direction.

"Singleton! Quick!" I called. "Bring your revolver."

He stopped and peered in my direction.

"Who is it?"

"Leslie. Come below, for God's sake!"

He came down the companion ladder, and in a dozen words I told him what had happened. I saw then that he had been drinking. He reeled against me, and seemed at a loss to know what to do.

"Get your revolver," I said, "and wake the captain."

He disappeared into the forward house, to come back a moment later with a revolver. I had got a lantern in the meantime, and ran to the forward companionway and into the main cabin.

"Where's the captain?" I asked.

"I didn't call him," Singleton replied, and muttered something unintelligible under his breath.

Swinging the lantern ahead of me, I led the way down the companionway. Something lay huddled at the foot. I had to step over it to get down. Singleton stood above, on the steps. I stooped and held the lantern close, and we both saw that it was the captain, killed as Vail had been. He was fully dressed except for his coat, and as he lay on his back, his cap had been placed over his mutilated face.

I thought I heard something moving behind me in the cabin, and wheeled sharply, holding my revolver leveled. The idea had come to me that the crew had mutinied, and that every one in the after house had been killed. The idea made me frantic; I thought of the women, of Elsa Lee, and I was ready to kill.

"Where is the light switch?" I demanded of Singleton, who was still on the companion steps, swaying.

"I don't know," he said, and collapsed, sitting huddled just above the captain's body, with his face in his hands.

I saw I need not look to him for help, and I succeeded in turning on the light in the swinging lamp in the center of the cabin. There was no sign of any struggle, and the cabin was empty. I went back to the captain's body, and threw a rug over it. Then I reached over and shook Singleton by the arm.

"Do something!" I raved. "Call the crew. Get somebody here, you drunken fool!"

He rose and staggered up the companionway, and I ran to Miss Lee's door. It was closed and locked, as were all the others except Vail's and the one I had broken open. I reached Mr. Turner's door last. It was locked, and I got no response to my knock. I remembered that his room and Vail's connected through a bath, and, still holding my revolver leveled, I ran into Vail's room again, this time turning on the light.

A night light was burning in the bath-room, and the door beyond was unlocked. I flung it open and stepped in. Turner was lying on his bed, fully dressed, and at first I thought he too had been murdered. But he was in a drunken stupor. He sat up, dazed, when I shook him by the arm.

"Mr. Turner!" I cried. "Try to rouse yourself, man! The captain has been murdered, and Mr. Vail!"

He made an effort to sit up, swayed, and fell back again. His face was swollen and purplish, his eyes congested. He made an effort to speak, but failed to be intelligible. I had no time to waste. Somewhere on the *Ella* the murderer was loose. He must be found.

I flung out of Turner's cabin as the crew, gathered from the forecastle and from the decks, ran down the forward companionway. I ran my eye over them. Every man was there, Singleton below by the captain's body, the crew, silent and horror-struck, grouped on the steps: Clarke, McNamara, Burns, Oleson, and Adams. Behind the crew, Charlie Jones had left the wheel and stood peering down, until Singleton sharply ordered him back. Williams, with a bandage on his head, and Tom, the mulatto cook, were in the group.

I stood, revolver in hand, staring at the men. Among them, I felt sure, was the murderer. But which one? All were equally pale, equally terrified.

"Boys," I said, "Mr. Vail and your captain have been murdered. The murderer must be on the ship — one of ourselves." There was a murmur at that. "Mr. Singleton, I suggest that these men stay together in a body, and that no one be allowed to go below until all have been searched and all weapons taken from them."

Singleton had dropped into a chair, and sat with his face buried in his hands, his back to the captain's body. He looked up without moving, and his face was gray.

"All right," he said. "Do as you like. I'm sick."

He looked sick. Burns, who had taken Schwartz's place as second mate, left the group and came toward me.

"We'd better waken the women," he said. "If you'll tell them, Leslie, I'll take the crew on deck and keep them there. Have you another revolver?"

"Take this one."

I gave him my revolver.

Singleton seemed dazed, and when Burns spoke of taking the men on deck, he got up dizzily.

"I'm going too," he muttered. "I'll go crazy if I stay down here with *that*."

The rug had been drawn back to show the crew what had happened. I drew it reverently over the body again.

After the men had gone, I knocked at Mrs. Turner's door. It was some time before she roused; when she answered, her voice was startled.

"What is it?"

"It's Leslie, Mrs. Turner. Will you come to the door?"

"In a moment."

She threw on a dressing gown, and opened the door.

"What is wrong?"

I told her, as gently as I could. I thought she would faint; but she pulled herself together and looked past me into the cabin.

"*That* is —— ?"

"The captain, Mrs. Turner."

"And Mr. Vail?"

"In his cabin."

"Where is Mr. Turner?"

"In his cabin, asleep."

She looked at me strangely, and, leaving the door, went into her sister's room, next. I heard Miss Lee's low cry of horror, and almost immediately the two women came to the doorway.

"Have you seen Mr. Turner?" Miss Lee demanded.

"Just now."

"Has Mrs. Johns been told?"

"Not yet."

She went herself to Mrs. Johns' cabin, and knocked. She got an immediate answer, and Mrs. Johns, partly dressed, opened the door.

"What's the matter?" she demanded. "The whole crew is tramping outside my windows. I hope we haven't struck an iceberg."

"Adèle, don't faint, please. Something awful has happened."

"Turner! He has killed some one finally!"

"Hush, for heaven's sake! Wilmer has been murdered, Adèle — and the captain."

Mrs. Johns had less control than the other women. She stood for an instant, with a sort of horrible grin on her face. Then she went down on the floor, full length, with a crash. Elsa Lee knelt beside her and slid a pillow under her head.

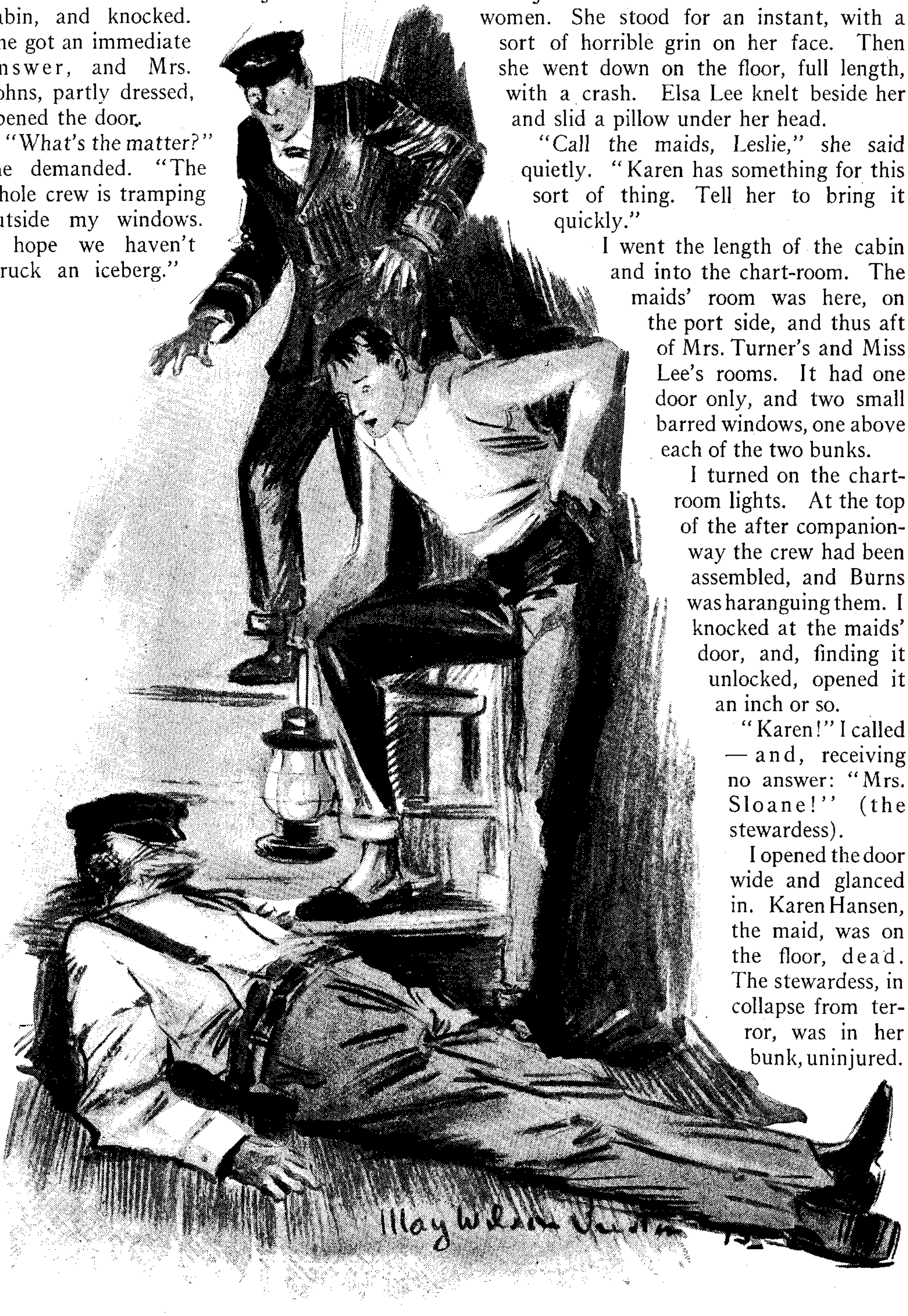
"Call the maids, Leslie," she said quietly. "Karen has something for this sort of thing. Tell her to bring it quickly."

I went the length of the cabin and into the chart-room. The maids' room was here, on the port side, and thus aft of Mrs. Turner's and Miss Lee's rooms. It had one door only, and two small barred windows, one above each of the two bunks.

I turned on the chart-room lights. At the top of the after companionway the crew had been assembled, and Burns was haranguing them. I knocked at the maids' door, and, finding it unlocked, opened it an inch or so.

"Karen!" I called — and, receiving no answer: "Mrs. Sloane!" (the stewardess).

I opened the door wide and glanced in. Karen Hansen, the maid, was on the floor, dead. The stewardess, in collapse from terror, was in her bunk, uninjured.



"SOMETHING LAY HUDDLED AT THE FOOT OF THE COMPANIONWAY. I STOOPED AND HELD THE LANTERN CLOSE, AND WE SAW THAT IT WAS THE CAPTAIN"

CHAPTER VII

I WENT to the after companionway and called up to the men to send the first mate down; but Burns came instead.

"Singleton's sick," he explained. "He's up there in a corner, with Oleson and McNamara holding him."

"Burns," I said cautiously — "I've found another!"

"God, not one of the women!"

"One of the maids — Karen."

Burns was a young fellow about my own age, and to this point he had stood up well. But he had been having a sort of flirtation with the girl, and I saw him go sick with horror. He wanted to see her, when he had got command of himself; but I would not let him enter the room. He stood outside, while I went in and carried out the stewardess, who was coming to and moaning. I took her forward, and told the three women there what I had found.

Mrs. Johns was better, and I found them all huddled in her room. I put the stewardess on the bed, and locked the door into the next room. Then, after examining the window, I gave Elsa Lee my revolver.

"Don't let any one in," I said. "I'll put a guard at the two companionways, and we'll let no one down. But — keep the door locked also."

She took the revolver from me, and examined it with the air of one familiar with firearms. Then she looked up at me, her lips as white as her face.

"We are relying on you, Leslie," she said.

And, at her words, the storm of self-contempt and bitterness that I had been holding in abeyance for the last half hour swept over me like a flood. I could have wept for fury.

"Why should you trust me?" I demanded. "I slept through the time when I was needed. And when I wakened and found myself locked in the store-room, I waited to take the lock off instead of breaking down the door! I ought to jump overboard."

"We are relying on you," she said again, simply, and I heard her fasten the door behind me as I went out.

Dawn was coming as I joined the crew, huddled around the wheel. There were nine men, counting Singleton. But Singleton hardly counted. He was in a state of profound mental and physical collapse. The *Ella* was without an accredited officer, and, for lack of orders to the contrary, the helmsman — McNamara now — was holding her to her course. Burns had taken Schwartz's place as second mate, but the situation was clearly beyond him. Turner's condition was known and frankly discussed. It was clear that, for a time at least, we would have to get along without him.

Charlie Jones, always an influence among the men, voiced the situation as we all stood together in the chill morning air.

"What we want to do, boys," he said, "is to make for the nearest port. This here is a police matter."

"And a hanging matter," some one else put in.

"We've got to remember, boys, that this ain't like a crime on land. We've got the fellow that did it. He's on the boat all right."

There was a stirring among the men, and some of them looked aft to where, guarded by the Swede Oleson, Singleton was sitting, his head in his hands.

"And, what's more," Charlie Jones went on, "I'm for putting Leslie here in charge — for now, anyhow. That's agreeable to you, is it, Burns?"

"But I don't know anything about a ship," I objected. "I'm willing enough, but I'm not competent."

I believe the thing had been discussed before I went up, for McNamara spoke up from the wheel.

"We'll manage that somehow or other, Leslie," he said. "We want somebody to take charge, somebody with a head, that's all. And since you ain't, in a manner of speaking, been one of us, nobody's feelings can't be hurt. Ain't that it, boys?"

"That, and a matter of brains," said Burns.

"But Singleton?" I glanced aft.

"Singleton is going in irons," was the reply I got.

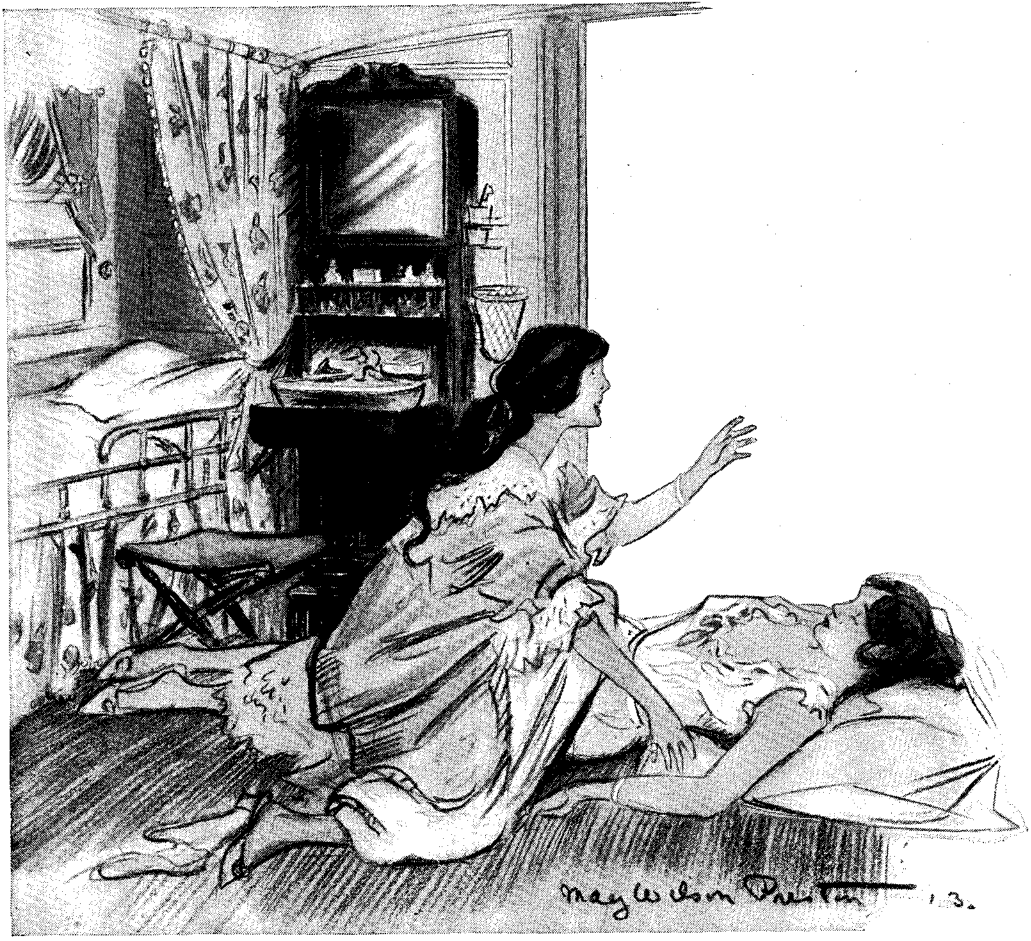
The light was stronger now, and I could see their faces. It was clear that the crew, to a man, believed him guilty, and that, as far as Singleton was concerned, my authority did not exist.

"All right," I said. "I'll do the best I can. First of all, I want every man to give up his weapons. Burns!"

"Aye, aye."

"Go over each man. Leave them their pocket-knives; take everything else."

The men lined up. The situation was tense, horrible, so that the miscellaneous articles from their pockets — knives, keys, plugs of chewing tobacco, and here and there, among the foreign ones, small combs for beard and mustache — unexpectedly brought to light, caused a smile of pure reaction. Two revolvers from Oleson and McNamara and one nicked razor from Adams completed the list of weapons we found. The crew submitted willingly. They seemed


May Wilson Preston 13.

"SHE WENT DOWN ON THE FLOOR, FULL LENGTH, WITH A CRASH. ELSA LEE KNELT BESIDE HER AND SLID A PILLOW UNDER HER HEAD. 'CALL THE MAIDS, LESLIE,' SHE SAID QUIETLY"

relieved to have some one to direct them, and the alacrity with which they obeyed my orders showed how they were suffering under the strain of inaction.

I went over to Singleton and put my hand on his shoulder.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Singleton," I said, "but I'll have to ask you for your revolver."

Without looking at me, he drew it from his hip pocket and held it out. I took it. It was loaded.

"It's out of order," he said briefly. "If it had been working right, I wouldn't be here."

I reached down and touched his wrist. His pulse was slow and rather faint, his hands cold.

"Is there anything I can do for you?"

"Yes," he snarled. "You can get me a belaying-pin and let me at those fools over there. Turner did this, and you know it as well as I do!"

I slid his revolver into my pocket, and went back to the men. Counting Williams and the cook and myself, there were nine of us. The cook I counted out, ordering him to go to the galley and prepare breakfast. The eight that were left I divided into two watches, Burns taking one and I the other. On Burns' watch were Clarke, McNamara, and Williams; on mine, Oleson, Adams, and Charlie Jones.

It was two bells, or five o'clock. Burns struck the gong sharply as an indication that order, of a sort, had been restored. The rising sun was gleaming on the sails; the gray surface of the sea was ruffling under the morning breeze. From the galley a thin stream of smoke was rising. Some of the horror of the night went with the darkness, but the thought of what waited in the cabin below was on us all.

I suggested another attempt to rouse Mr. Turner, and Burns and Clarke went below. They came back in ten minutes, reporting no change in Turner's condition. There was open grumbling among the men at the situation, but we were helpless. Burns and I decided to go on as if Turner were not on board, until he was in condition to take hold.

We thought it best to bring up the bodies while all the crew was on duty, and then to take up the watches. I arranged to have one man constantly on guard in the after house — a difficult matter where all were under suspicion. Burns suggested Charlie Jones as probably the most reliable, and I gave him my revolver. The rest of the crew, except Oleson, on guard over the mate, was detailed to assist in carrying up the three bodies. Williams was taken along to get sheets from the linen room.

We brought the captain up first, laying him on a sheet on the deck and folding the edges over him. It was terrible work. Even I, fresh from a medical college, grew nauseated over it. He was heavy. It was slow work, getting him up. Vail we brought up in the sheets from his bunk. Of the three, he was the most mutilated. The maid Karen showed only one injury, a smashing blow on the head, probably from the head of the ax. For ax it had been, beyond a doubt.

I put Williams to work below to clear away every evidence of what had happened. He went down, ashy-faced, only to rush up again, refusing to stay alone. I sent Clarke with him, and instructed Charlie Jones to keep them there until the cabin was in order.

At three bells the cook brought coffee, and some of the men took it. I tried to swallow, but it choked me.

Burns had served as second mate on a sailing vessel, and thought he could take us back, at least into more traveled waters. We decided to head back to New York, and to fly a signal of distress. I got the code-book from the captain's cabin, and we ran up the American flag, union down. We agreed also to sound the fog whistle while any other ship was in sight. I got the code word for "Mutiny — need assistance," and I asked the mate if he would signal if a vessel came near enough. But he turned sullen and refused to answer.

I find it hard to recall calmly the events of that morning: the three still and shrouded figures, prone on deck; the crew, bareheaded, standing around, eyeing each other stealthily, panic-ready to leap free and grip somebody by the throat; the grim determination, the reason for which I did not yet know, to put the first mate in irons; and, over all, the clear sunrise of an August morning on the ocean, rails and decks gleaming, an odor of coffee in the air, the joyous lift and splash of the bowsprit as the *Ella*, headed back on her course, seemed to make for home like a nag for the stable.

Surely none of these men, some weeping, all grieving, could be the fiend who had committed the crime. One by one, I looked in their faces — at Burns, youngest member of the crew, a blue-eyed, sandy-haired Scot; at Clarke and Adams and Charlie Jones, old in the service of the Turner line; at McNamara, a shrewd little Irishman; at Oleson the Swede. And, in spite of myself, I could not help comparing them with the heavy-shouldered, sodden-faced man below in his cabin, the owner of the ship.

One explanation came to me, and I leaped at it — the possibility of a stowaway hidden in the hold, some maniacal fugitive who had found in the little cargo boat's empty hull ample room to hide. The men, too, seized at the idea. One and all volunteered for what might prove to be a dangerous service.

I chose Charlie Jones and Clarke as being most familiar with the ship, and, armed with revolvers, we went down into the hold. Clarke carried a lantern. Charlie Jones and I held revolvers. But, although we searched every foot of space, we found nothing. The formaldehyde with which Turner had fumigated the ship clung here tenaciously, and, mixed with the odors of bilge water and the indescribable heavy smells left by tropical cargoes, made me dizzy and ill.

We were stumbling along, Clarke with the lantern, I next, and Charlie Jones behind, on our way to the ladder again, when I received a stunning blow on the back of the head. I turned dizzy, expecting nothing less than sudden death, when it developed that Jones, having stumbled over a loose plank, had fallen forward, his revolver in his outstretched hand striking my head.

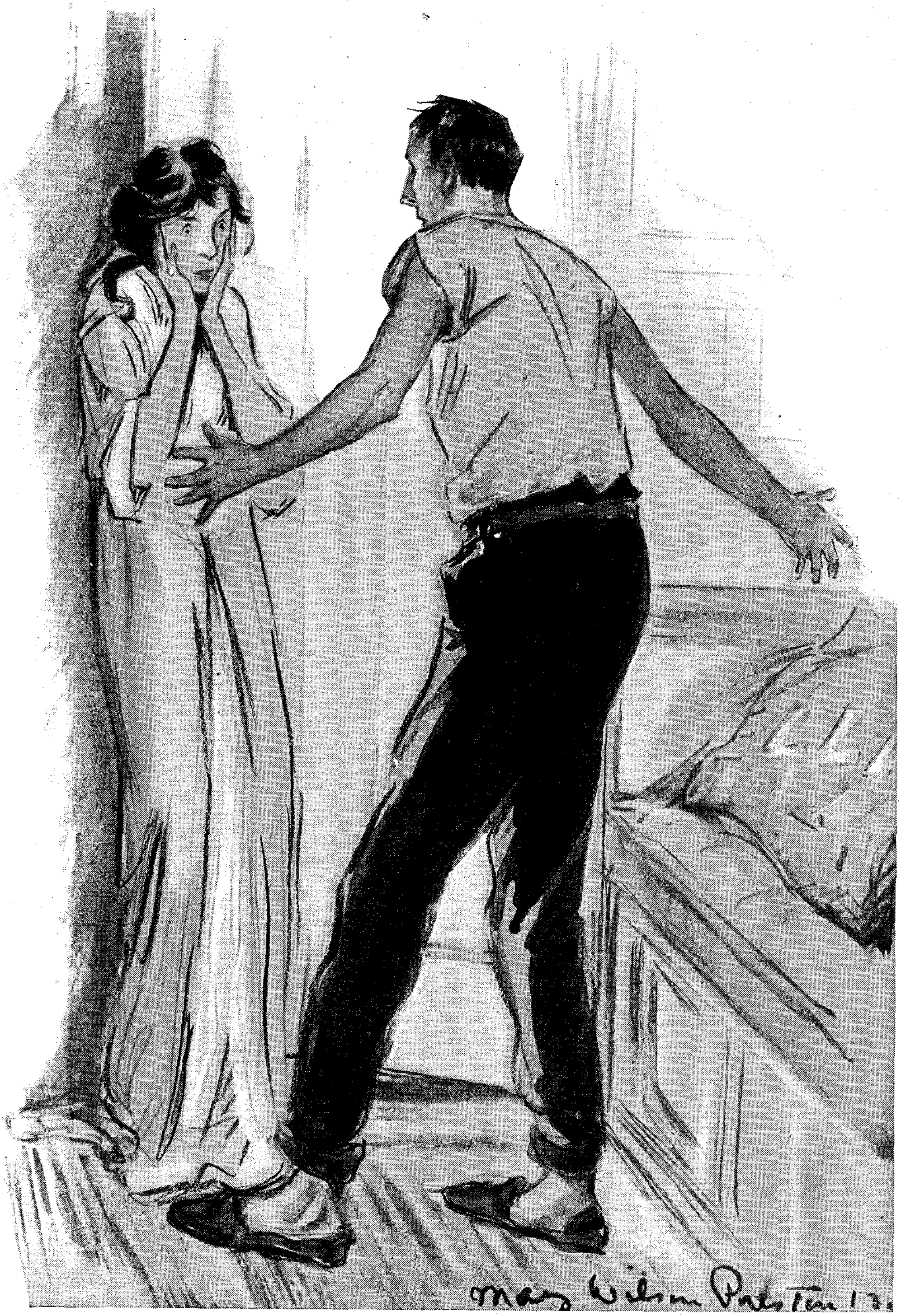
He picked himself up sheepishly, and we went on. But so unnerved was I by this fresh shock that it was a moment or two before I could essay the ladder.

Burns was waiting at the hatchway, peering down. Beside him on the deck lay a blood-stained ax.

Elsa Lee, on hearing the story of Henrietta Sloane, had gone to the maids' cabin, and had found it where it had been flung in the berth of the stewardess. The handle had struck her on the shoulder.

CHAPTER VIII

But, after all, the story of Henrietta Sloane only added to the mystery. She told it to me, sitting propped in a chair in Mrs. Johns' room, her face white, her lips dry and twitching. The crew were making such breakfast as they could on deck, and Mr. Turner was still in a stupor in his room across the main cabin. The four women, drawn together in their distress, were


Mary Wilson Preston 13.

"'IF I STAY HERE I SHALL GO CRAZY,' SHE SAID IN AN UNDERTONE. 'MISS LEE,' I PROTESTED, 'THE MURDERER IS STILL ON THE SHIP'" huddled in the center of the room, touching hands now and then, as if finding comfort in contact, and reassurance.

"I went to bed early," said the stewardess. "About ten o'clock, I think. Karen had not come down; I wakened when the watch changed. It was hot, and the window from our room to the deck was open. There is a curtain over it, to keep the steersman from looking in — it is close to the wheel. The bell, striking every half hour, does not waken me any more, although it did at first. It is just outside the window. But I heard the watch change. I heard eight bells struck, and the lookout man on the forecastle call, 'All's well.'

"I sat up and turned on the lights. Karen had not come down, and I was alarmed. She had been — had been flirting a little with one of the sailors, and I had warned her that it wouldn't do. She'd be found out and get into trouble.

"The only way to reach our cabin was through the chart-room, and when I opened the door an inch or two, I saw why Karen had not come down. Mr. Turner and Mr. Singleton were sitting there. They were — " She hesitated.

"Please go on," said Mrs. Turner. "They were drinking?"

"Yes, Mrs. Turner. And Mr. Vail was there, too. He was saying that the captain would come down and there would be more trouble. I shut the door and stood just inside, listening. Mr. Singleton said he hoped the captain would come — that he and Mr. Turner only wanted a chance to get at him."

Miss Lee leaned forward and searched the stewardess' face with strained eyes.

"You are sure that he mentioned Mr. Turner in that?"

"That was exactly what he said, Miss Lee. The captain came down just then, and ordered Mr. Singleton on deck. I think he went, for I did not hear his voice again. I thought, from the sounds, that Mr. Vail and the captain were trying to get Mr. Turner to his room."

Mrs. Johns had been sitting back, her eyes shut, holding a bottle of salts to her nose. Now she looked up.

"My dear woman," she said, "are you trying to tell us that we slept through all that?"

"If you did not hear it, you must have slept," the stewardess persisted obstinately. "The door into the main cabin was closed. Karen came down just after. She was frightened. She said the first mate was on deck, in a terrible humor, and that Charlie Jones, who was at the wheel, had appealed to Burns not to leave him there — that trouble was coming. That must have been half past twelve. The bell struck as she put out the light. We both went to sleep then, until Mrs. Turner's ringing for Karen roused us."

"But I did not ring for Karen."

The woman stared at Mrs. Turner.

"But the bell rang, Mrs. Turner. Karen got up at once and, turning on the light, looked at the clock. 'What do you think of that?' she said. 'Ten minutes to three, and I'd just got to sleep!' I growled about the light, and she put it out, after she had thrown on a wrapper. The room was dark when she opened the door. There was a little light in the chart-room, from the binnacle lantern. The door at the top of the companionway was always closed at night; the light came through the window near the wheel."

She had kept up very well to this point, telling her story calmly and keeping her voice down. But when she reached the actual killing of the Danish maid, she went to pieces. She took to shivering violently, and her pulse, under my fingers, was small and rapid. I mixed some aromatic spirits with water and gave it to her, and we waited until she could go on.

For the first time, then, I realized that I was clad only in shirt and trousers, with a handkerchief around my head where the accident in the hold had left me with a nasty cut. My bare feet were thrust into down-at-the-heel slippers. I saw Miss Lee's eyes on me, and colored.

"I had forgotten," I said uncomfortably. "I'll have time to find my coat while she is recovering. I have been so occupied —— "

"Don't be a fool," Mrs. Johns said brusquely. "No one cares how you look. We only thank Heaven you are alive to look after us. Do you know what we have been doing, locked in down here? We have been —— "

"Please, Adèle!" said Elsa Lee. And Mrs. Johns, shrugging her shoulders, went back to her salts.

The rest of the story we got slowly. Briefly, it was this. Karen, having made her protest at being called at such an hour, had put on a wrapper and pinned up her hair. The light was on. The stewardess said she heard a curious chopping sound in the main cabin, followed by a fall, and called Karen's attention to it. The maid, impatient and drowsy, had said it was probably Mr. Turner falling over something, and that she hoped she would not meet him. Once or twice, when he had been drinking, he had made overtures to her, and she detested him.

The sound outside ceased. It was about five minutes since the bell had rung, and Karen yawned and sat down on the bed. "I'll let her ring again," she said. "If she gets in the habit of this sort of thing, I'm going to leave." The stewardess asked her to put out the light and let her sleep, and Karen did so. The two women were in darkness, and the stewardess dosed for a minute only. She was awakened by Karen touching her on the shoulder and whispering close to her ear.

"That beast is out there," she said. "I peered out, and I think he is sitting on the companion steps. You listen, and if he tries to stop me I'll call you."

The stewardess was wide awake by that time. She thought perhaps the bell, instead of coming from Mrs. Turner's room, had come from the room adjoining Turner's, where Vail slept, and which had been originally designed for Mrs. Turner. She suggested turning on the light again and looking at the bell register; but Karen objected.

The stewardess sat up in her bed, which was the one under the small window opening on the deck aft. She could not see through the door directly, but a faint light came through the doorway as Karen opened the door.

The girl stood there, looking out. Then suddenly she threw up her hands and screamed, and the next moment there was a blow struck. She staggered back a step or two, and fell into the room. The stewardess saw a white figure in the doorway as the girl fell. Almost instantly something whizzed by her, striking the end of a pillow and bruising her arm. She must have fainted. When she recovered, faint daylight was coming into the room, and the body of the Danish girl was lying as it had fallen.

She tried to get up, and fainted again.

That was her story, and it did not tell us much that we needed to know. She showed me her right arm, which was badly bruised and discolored at the shoulder.

"What do you mean by a white figure?"

"It looked white: it seemed to shine."

"When I went to call you, Mrs. Sloane, the door to your room was closed."

"I saw it closed!" she said positively. "I had forgotten that, but now I remember. The ax fell beside me, and I tried to scream, but I could not. I saw the door closed, very slowly and without a sound. Then I fainted."

The thing was quite possible. Owing to the small size of the cabin, and to the fact that it must accommodate two bunks, the door opened *out* into the chart-room. Probably the woman had fainted before I broke the lock of my door and fell into the main cabin. But a *white* figure!

"Karen exclaimed," Miss Lee said slowly, "that some one was sitting on the companion steps?"

"Yes, miss."

"And she thought that it was Mr. Turner?"

"Yes." The stewardess looked quickly at Mrs. Turner, and averted her eyes. "It may have been all talk, miss, about his — about his bothering her. She was a great one to fancy that men were following her about."

Miss Lee got up and came to the door where I was standing.

"Surely we need not be prisoners any longer!" she said in an undertone. "It is daylight. If I stay here I shall go crazy."

"The murderer is still on the ship," I protested. "And just now the deck is — hardly a place for women. Wait until this afternoon, Miss Lee. By that time I shall have arranged for a guard for you. Although God knows, with every man under suspicion, where we will find any to trust."

"*You* will arrange a guard!"

"The men have asked me to take charge."

"But — I don't understand. The first mate —— "

" —— is a prisoner of the crew."

"They accuse him!"

"They have to accuse some one. There's a sort of hysteria among the men, and they've fixed on Singleton. They won't hurt him,— I'll see to that,— and it makes for order."

She considered for a moment. I had time then to see the havoc the night had wrought in her. She was pale, with deep hollows around her eyes. Her hands shook and her mouth drooped wearily. But, although her face was lined with grief, it was not the passionate sorrow of a loving girl. She had not loved Vail, I said to myself. She had not loved Vail! My heart beat faster.

"Will you allow me to leave this room for five minutes?"

"If I may go with you, and if you will come back without protest."

"You are arbitrary!" she said resentfully. "I only wish to speak to Mr. Turner."

"Then — if I may wait at the door."

"I shall not go, under those conditions."

"Miss Lee," I said desperately, "surely you must realize the state of affairs. We must trust no one — *no one*. Every shadowy corner, every closed door, may hold death in its most terrible form."

"You are right, of course. Will you wait outside? I can dress and be ready in five minutes."

I went into the main cabin, now bright with the morning sun, which streamed down the forward companionway. The door to Vail's room across was open, and Williams, working in nervous haste, was putting it in order.

Walking up and down, his shrewd eyes keenly alert, Charlie Jones was on guard, revolver in hand. He came over to me at once.

"Turner is moving, in there," he said, jerking his thumb toward the forward cabin. "What are you going to do? Let a drunken sot like that give us orders, and bang us with a marlinespike when we don't please him?"

"He is the owner. But one thing we can do, Jones. We can keep him from more liquor. Williams!"

He came out, more dead than alive.

"Williams," I said sternly, "I give you an hour to get rid of every ounce of liquor on the *Ella*. Remember, not a bottle is to be saved."

"But Mistah Turner —— "

"I'll answer to Mr. Turner. Get it overboard before he gets around. And, Williams!"

"Well?"—sullenly.

"I'm going around after you, and if I find so much as a pint, I'll put you in that room you have just left, and lock you in."

He turned even grayer, and went into the store-room.

A day later, and the crew would probably have resented what they saw that morning. But that day they only looked up apathetically from their gruesome work of sewing into bags of canvas the sheeted bodies on the deck, while a gray-faced negro in a white coat flung over the rail cases of fine wines, baskets and boxes full of bottles, dozen after dozen of brandies and liquors, all sinking beyond salvage in the blue Atlantic.

CHAPTER IX

My first thought had been for the women, and, unluckily, to save them a shock I had all evidences of the crime cleared away as quickly as possible. Stains that might have been of invaluable service in determining the murderer were washed away almost before they were dry. I realized this now, too late. But the ax remained, and I felt that its handle probably contained a record for more skilful eyes than mine to read, prints that under the microscope would reveal the murderer's identity as clearly as a photograph.

I sent for Burns, who reported that he had locked the ax in the captain's cabin. He gave me the key, which I fastened to a string and hung around my neck under my shirt. He also reported that, as I had suggested, the crew had gone, two at a time, into the forecastle, and had brought up what they needed to stay on deck. The forecastle had been closed and locked in the presence of the crew, and the key given to Burns, who fastened it to his watch-chain. The two hatchways leading to the hold had been fastened down also, and Oleson, who was ship's carpenter, had nailed them fast.

The crew had been instructed to stay aft of the wheel, except when on watch. Thus the helmsman need not be alone. As I have said, the door at the top of the companion steps, near the wheel, was closed and locked, and entrance to the after house was to be gained only by the forward companion. It was the intention of Burns and myself to keep watch here, amidships.

Burns had probably suffered more than any of us. Whatever his relation to the Hansen woman had been, he had been with her only three hours before her death, and she was wearing a ring of his, a silver rope tied in a sailor's knot, when she died. And Burns had been fond of Captain Richardson, in a crew where respect rather than affection toward the chief officer was the rule.

When he gave me the key to the captain's room Charlie Jones, revolver in hand, had reached the other end of the long cabin, and was staring through into the chart-room. It was a time to trust no one, and I assured myself that Jones was not looking before I thrust it into my shirt.

"They're — all ready, Leslie," Burns said, his face working. "What are we going to do with them?"

"We'll have to take them back."

"But we can't do that. It's a two weeks' matter, and in this weather —— "

"We will take them back, Burns," I said shortly, and he assented mechanically:

"Aye, aye, sir."

Just how it was to be done was a difficult thing to decide. Miss Lee had not appeared yet, and the three of us, Jones, Burns, and I, talked it over. Jones suggested that we put them in one of the life-boats, and nail over it a canvas and tarpaulin cover.

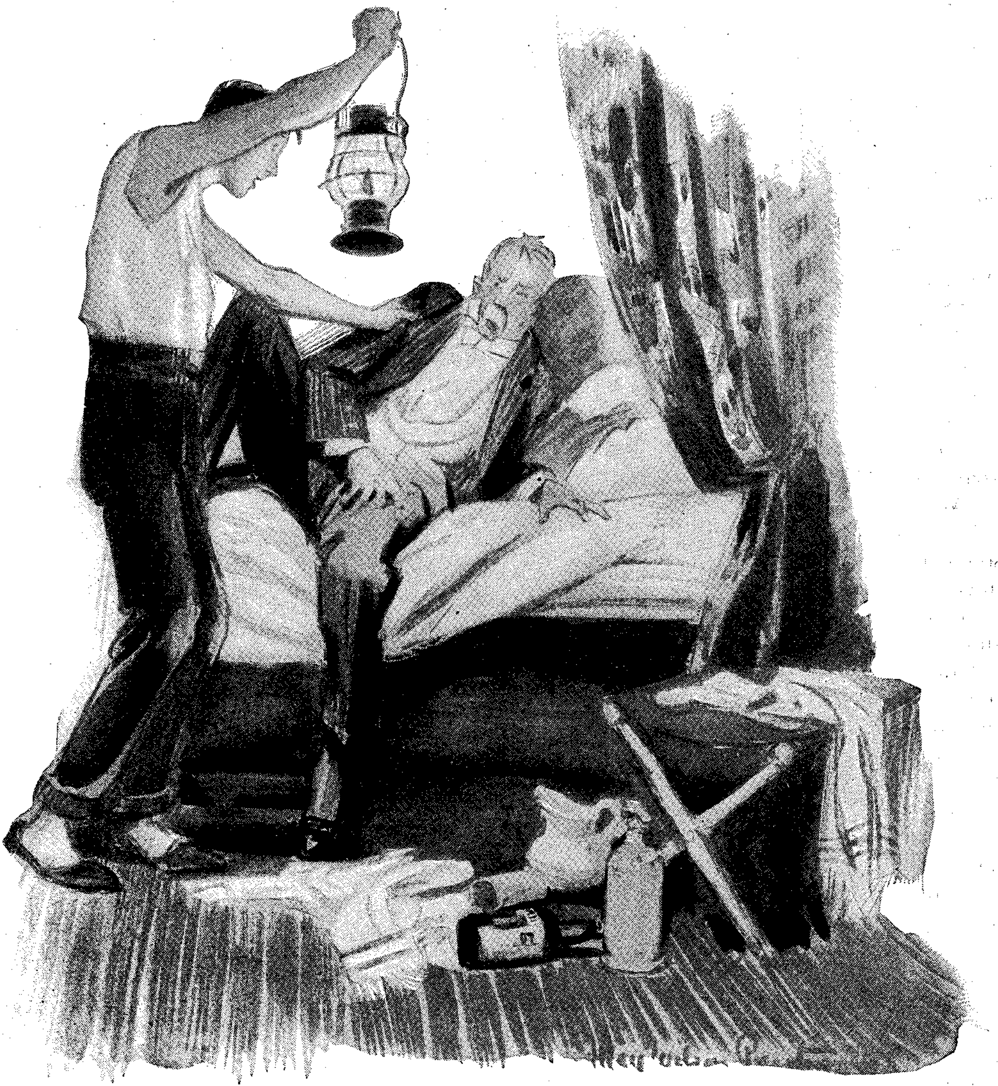
"It ain't my own idea," he said modestly. "I seen it done once, on the *Argentina*. It worked all right for a while, and after a week or so we lowered the jolly-boat and towed it astern."

I shuddered; but the idea was a good one, and I asked Burns to go up and get the boat ready.

"We must let the women up this afternoon," I said, "and, if it is possible, try to keep them from learning where the bodies are. We can rope off a part of the deck for them, and ask them not to leave it."

Miss Lee came out then, and Burns went on deck.

The girl was looking better. The exertion of



"'MR. TURNER!' I CRIED. 'TRY TO ROUSE YOURSELF, MAN! THE CAPTAIN HAS BEEN MURDERED, AND MR. VAIL!'"

dressing had brought back her color, and her lips, although firmly set, were not drawn. She stood just outside the door and drew a deep breath.

"You must not keep us prisoners any longer, Leslie," she said. "Put a guard over us, if you must, but let us up in the air."

"This afternoon, Miss Lee," I said. "This morning you are better below."

She understood me, but she had no conception of the brutality of the crime, even then.

"I am not a child. I wish to see them. I shall have to testify —— "

"You will not see them, Miss Lee."

She stood twisting her handkerchief in her hands. She saw Charlie Jones pacing the length of the cabin, revolver in hand. From the chart-room came the sound of hammering, where the after companion door, already locked, was being additionally secured with strips of wood nailed across.

"I understand," she said finally. "Will you take me to Karen's room?"

I could see no reason for objecting; but so thorough was the panic that had infected us all that I would not allow her in until I had preceded her, and had searched in the clothes closet and under the two bunks. Williams had not reached this room yet, and there was a pool of blood on the floor.

She had a great deal of courage. She glanced at the stain, and looked away again quickly.

"I — think I shall not come in. Will you look at the bell register for me? What bell is registered?"

"Three."

"Three!" she said. "Are you sure?"

I looked again. "It is three."

"Then it was not my sister's bell that rang. It was Mr. Vail's!"

"It must be a mistake. Perhaps the wires ——"

"Mrs. Turner's room is number one. Please go back and ask her to ring her bell, while I see how it registers."

But I would not leave her there alone. I went with her to her sister's door, and together we returned to the maids' cabin. Mrs. Turner had rung as we requested, and her bell had registered "One."

"He rang for help!" she cried, and broke down utterly. She dropped into a chair in the chart-room and cried softly, helplessly, while I stood by, unable to think of anything to do or say. I think now that it was the best thing she could have done, though at the time I was alarmed. I ventured, finally, to put my hand on her shoulder.

"Please!" I said.

Charlie Jones came to the door of the chart-room, and retreated with instinctive good taste. She stopped crying after a time, and I knew the exact instant when she realized my touch. I felt her stiffen; without looking up, she drew away from my hand; and I stepped back, hurt and angry — the hurt for her, the anger that I could not remember that I was her hired servant.

When she got up, she did not look at me, nor I at her — at least not consciously. But when, in those days, was I not looking at her, seeing her, even when my eyes were averted, feeling her presence before any ordinary sense told me she was near? The sound of her voice in the early mornings, when I was washing down the deck, had been enough to set my blood pounding in my ears. The last thing I saw at night, when I took myself to the store-room to sleep, was her door across the main cabin; and in the morning, stumbling out with my pillow and blanket, I gave it a foolish little sign of greeting.

What she would not see the men had seen, and, in their need, they had made me their leader. To her I was Leslie, the common sailor. I registered a vow, that morning, that I would be the common sailor until the end of the voyage.

"Mr. Turner is awake, I believe," I said stiffly.

"Very well."

She turned back into the main cabin; but she paused at the store-room door.

"It is curious that you heard nothing," she said slowly. "You slept with this door open, didn't you?"

"I was locked in."

She stooped quickly and looked at the lock.

"You broke it open?"

"Partly, at the last. I heard — " I stopped. I did not want to tell her what I had heard. But she knew.

"You heard — Karen, when she screamed?"

"Yes. I was aroused before that,— I do not know how,— and found I was locked in. I thought it might be a joke — forecastle hands are fond of joking, and they resented my being brought here to sleep. I took out some of the screws with my knife, and — then I broke the door."

"You saw no one?"

"It was dark; I saw and heard no one."

"But, surely — the man at the wheel —— "

"Hush," I warned her; "he is there. He heard something, but the helmsman can not leave the wheel."

She was stooping to the lock again.

"You are sure it was locked?"

"The bolt is still shot." I showed her.

"Then — where is the key?"

"The key!"

"Certainly. Find the key, and you will find the man who locked you in."

"Unless," I reminded her, "it flew out when I broke the lock."

"In that case, it will be on the floor."

But an exhaustive search of the cabin floor discovered no key. Jones, seeing us searching, helped, his revolver in one hand and a lighted match in the other, handling both with an abandon of ease that threatened us alternately with fire and a bullet. But there was no key.

"It stands to reason, miss," he said, when we had given up, "that, since the key isn't here, it isn't on the ship. That there key is a sort of red-hot give-away. No one is going to carry a thing like that around. Either it's here in this cabin — which it isn't — or it's overboard."

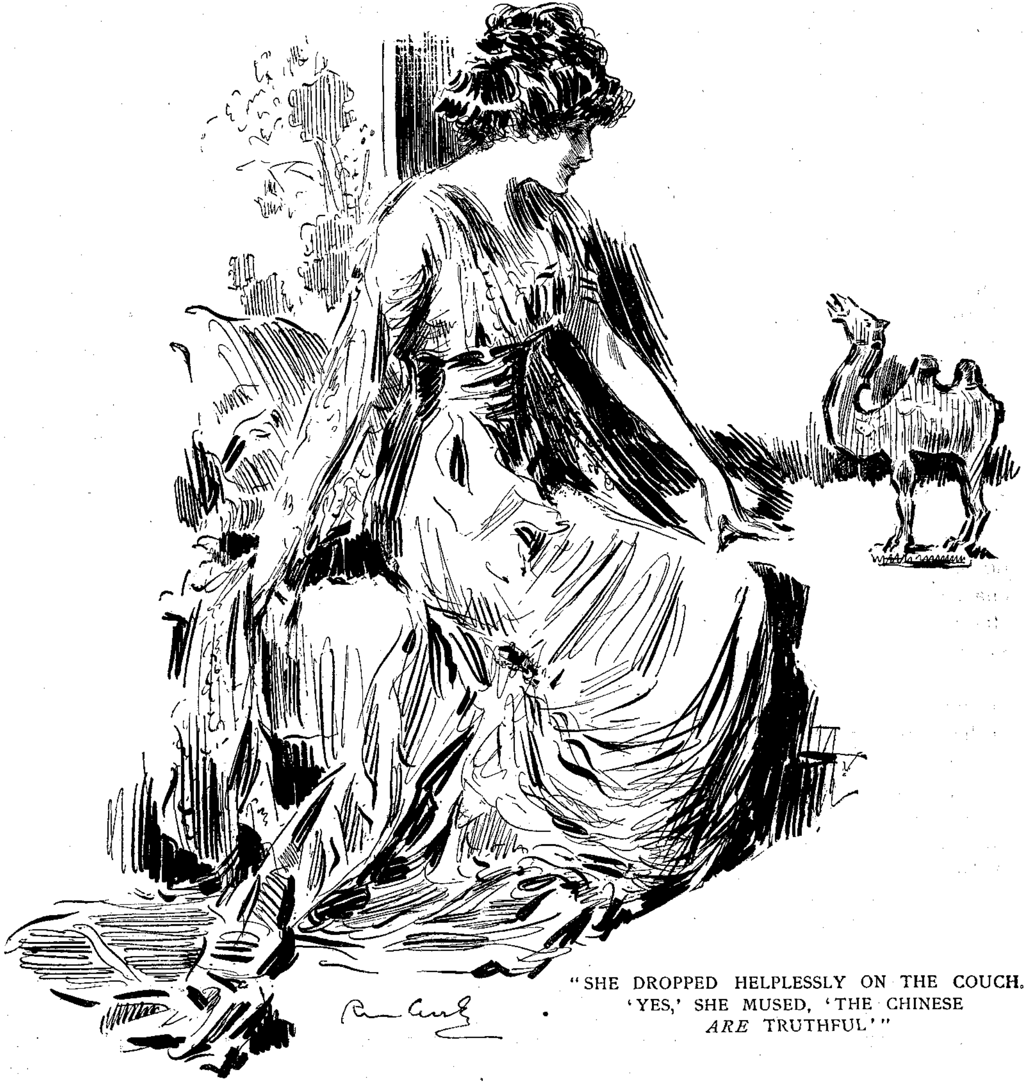
"Very likely, Jones. But I shall ask Mr. Turner to search the men."

She went toward Turner's door, and Jones leaned over me, putting a hand on my arm.

"She's right, boy," he said quickly. "Don't let 'em know what you're after, but go through their pockets. And their shoes!" he called after me. "A key slips into a shoe mighty easy."

But, after all, it was not necessary. The key was to be found, and very soon.

TO BE CONTINUED



"SHE DROPPED HELPLESSLY ON THE COUCH. 'YES,' SHE MUSED, 'THE CHINESE *ARE* TRUTHFUL'"

THE CAMEL OF HAN

The Charmed Life of Miss Austin

BY SAMUEL MERWIN

AUTHOR OF "BEHIND THE SCREEN," "THE PEKING PUG," ETC.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY R. M. CROSBY

"UNCLE FRANK has a grouch," thought Miss Austin, glancing across the table, "because I'm late to dinner. He's going to be ugly in a minute." With which observation, she dropped her gloves into her lap, pinned up her veil, and told the Chinese waiter in her best Pidgin-English that she would skip soup and fish and begin with the roast.

"I've been with Miss Eavesby all afternoon," she explained sweetly, in the hope of averting the storm, "at the English Board Mission. She's ill, you know. But she is wonderful — her experiences and the fight she has made for her people out in Shansi. She would die for those heathen in a minute."

The cloud on Mr. Wilberly's fat face was gathering into a scowl. Edith had forgotten his particular dislike for missionaries. Now, doubtless, she had turned him on. He would rant. She disliked ranting. She hesitated, but then concluded, a thought defiantly:

"I wish I had started as a missionary. My life is so useless. I'd like to be right out there in the fight with Rhoda Eavesby."

Mr. Wilberly cleared his throat.

"Do you think you're as considerate as you might be, Edith — knocking around Peking alone, at night, this way? How about your aunt and me? There are people who would hold us accountable for you. But, the way you go on, never thinking of anybody but yourself — of anything but your own whims ——"

Mrs. Wilberly, with a fluttering glance around, ventured:

"But I'm sure she came straight to the hotel from the mission, Frank."

Mr. Wilberly was not to be headed. "And the people you pick up, Edith! I tell you, they're a bad lot out here. As a practical business man, I've had chances to observe 'em. Even experienced people get taken in. And you, a girl with not the slightest knowledge of life ——"

"But a missionary!" faltered Edith, while the color slowly mounted her cheeks. "And a frail, sweet little woman, all spirit and faith and courage. You just don't know, Uncle Frank. She is a saint."

"She *isn't* a saint!" sputtered Mr. Wilberly.

"Ssh!" breathed his wife. "Don't raise your voice, Frank!"

But Mr. Wilberly had to get it all out. "They're *not* saints — none of 'em. They're a meddlesome lot of humbugs, mixing in things they're not fitted to understand. Why don't they stick to their preaching! As a business man, I ——"

He paused. There was a long, long silence. Edith was still apparently intent on the menu, but her lashes drooped over eyes that had deepened from their usual hazel to a blazing brown. The flush lingered on her cheeks and temples. Surely everybody at the near-by tables must know that they were quarreling absurdly, grotesquely. Oh, how she hated scenes, argument, criticism! "After all," — the thought rushed into her mind on a hot wave of anger,— "he's only an uncle by marriage."

The afternoon had been stirring, beautiful, at the bedside of that little pale woman with the gently smiling mouth, thin hair, and luminous blue eyes. And the rickshaw ride, alone at dusk, through the swarming, muddy streets of old Peking — there had been the stir of enchantment in it. And now — this . . . ! Tears were crowding into her eyes; she fought them back.

All through the meal the silence continued — until coffee-and-cigar time. Then Mr. Wilberly began to breathe heavily. He was going to say something. Edith wondered what. Probably an attempt at good humor — something jocular, offhand. That was always likely, with him, to be the next phase after an outbreak. "Day after to-morrow," she reflected, "he'll give me a pearl necklace or something. And I don't want him to. Oh, why can't people just *behave!*"

"Funny thing," began Uncle Frank, with an effort at a chuckle. "You know, I've been nibbling at one or two of those old vases at the porcelain merchant's in the Ha Ta High Street." (Yes, it was to be the offhand vein.) "Well, Blumstein tipped me off to-day — the fellow has really got some fine Ming and K'ang Hsi stuff, and wants big prices — but it seems he is acting for Heatherington, the English dealer that's stopping here at the hotel."

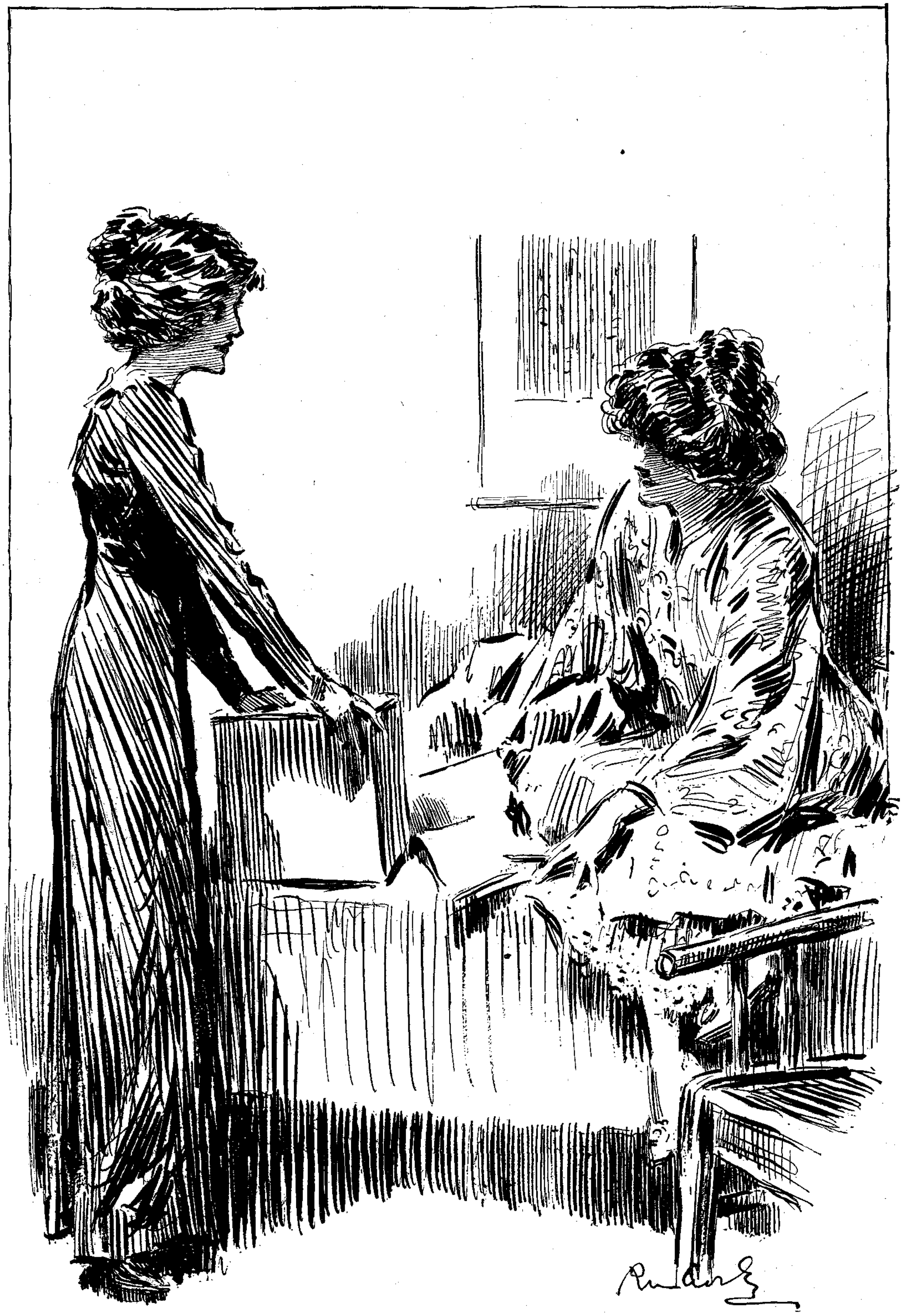
"You don't say!" responded Mrs. Wilberly, eager to humor him.

"Yes, I do. Heatherington, it appears, brought the stuff all the way from London, and is selling it here secretly to rich Americans. Can you beat it? Blumstein says he can average twenty per cent higher prices here than in New York or London. Folks spend freer, you know, when they're traveling. Fact. I do myself. Lucky I picked up this tip. I'd have fallen for it, sure. But never again! The next time I buy Chinese stuff, I buy in little old New York."

He attempted another chuckle, but with no great success. Edith did not so much as raise her eyes. Finally, muttering something about talking things over with Blumstein, he left them.

"You must try not to mind your uncle," said Mrs. Wilberly. "These indirect ways of doing business upset him. Everything is delay — delay — delay. And everybody smiles. It's that matter of the Shansi concession. He's been thinking of nothing else since we landed at Shanghai, and I don't see that the thing has progressed an inch. I shall be glad, for one, when he definitely gives it up. Then maybe we could start back home. But, as it stands now, nothing will suit Mr. Blumstein but our going clear out there to T'ai Yuan Fu. He says we shall have government escort and there'll be no possible danger."

"Well," replied Edith in a low voice, "a glimpse of the interior *would* be interesting. It



"'THERE'S A BIT OF MY WRONG SIDE LEFT,' SAID THE LITTLE MISSIONARY. 'IT'S IN THAT BOX'!"

has looked lately as if we weren't even going to have the trip to the Ming Tombs."

Mrs. Wilberly hesitated, and her eyes wandered. She was wondering how to rephrase her husband's sputterings on the subject: "I can't undertake to run my business and Edith too — certainly not out there. It is all well enough for people that'll stay put. But Edith — in T'ai Yuan? Not much!"

Finally she said: "Your uncle thinks it would be safer for us to leave you here at the hotel. The Oldhams wire that they're coming in to-morrow on the Hankow train; and your uncle is sure they'll be glad to take care of you."

"You're leaving soon, then?"

"Why — yes. By the early train to-morrow morning. Some dreadful hour — six o'clock, I think. We won't disturb you; and you can stay right on here with the Oldhams."

Miss Austin turned away a face that gave no hint of whatever thoughts were stirring behind it. "If anybody 'takes care' of me," she was thinking, "it will be Rhoda Eavesby."

It was a trim, cheerful girl who appeared next morning at the bedside of Miss Rhoda Eavesby in the English Board Mission, carrying a tiny black and white sleeve-dog, and followed by a "boy" with a wicker suit-case.

The invalid greeted her with a wistful smile. "It is good of you to be so fresh and pretty, dear," she said, and clung to her hand. "You bring the lovely spring day right into the room with you."

Miss Austin blushed with pleasure. "Was my telephone message *very* abrupt?" she said. "Aunt and uncle left for T'ai Yuan this morning — with Mr. Blumstein. I *couldn't* stay around the hotel with those stupid Oldham people, so I made up my mind to come here."

This speech had an unexpected effect. The little missionary sat up straight.

"My dear," she said, "you don't mean *the* Blumstein — Simon Blumstein, of the North China Development Company?"

Miss Austin nodded. "Yes, his name is Simon, I think."

Miss Eavesby sat motionless for a long moment. Then — "I've never thought to ask your uncle's name, dear."

Edith told her. Miss Eavesby knit her brows, then drew another pillow in behind her and leaned back against it. Edith, concerned, looked at the thin face, usually gentle and smiling, but now keen, almost sharp, with a set to the mouth and a light in the blue eyes.

"So they're at it again," mused the missionary. She looked up and soberly studied the girlish face before her. "I don't quite know what to say."

"If it's about uncle?"

"I'm afraid it is." She hesitated again. "Please tell me. What are they at again?"

"Well, suppose you look there in the middle bureau drawer — over to the right. Oh, just rummage things around! Now bring me that fat red portfolio. The whole story is in there somewhere." When Edith had brought the portfolio, Miss Eavesby drew thick bundles of papers from the various compartments and strewed them about the bed. "Here — this one. I translated them myself — all the petitions of the 'Gentry and People of Shansi.'" She smiled faintly. "Though perhaps 'petitions' isn't just the word."

She glanced over the document, and sighed. "Why do foreigners have to come in and stir it all up again — this dreadful business — just because they are greedy for more — and more — and more! We missionaries come from Christian lands and try to teach the gospel of our Christ to these yellow people, and then our leading citizens follow us and use the power and intelligence that is the birthright of civilization to rob them of all they have!"

The blue eyes were flashing now, and there was a spot of red on each cheek.

"Oh, well," she added, rather sadly, "you won't like to hear me say these things."

"Please go on," said Edith softly. "I want to understand."

"Well, fifteen years ago a European company — the Shansi Syndicate, it was called — got a concession granting them the 'sole right' to work the best coal and iron mines of Shansi. They got it in the usual way — bribery at Peking. Native companies were prohibited from setting up modern machinery or competing in any effective way. The province all but rose up in arms. Listen to this. It sounds quaint as I've translated it; but oh, they meant it!

"'The People of Shansi must hold to their mines till death, as Li Pai Jen committed suicide on account of the mines, and about him we can only think with grief and sorrow and tears; yet if the government and officials still unrighteously flatter the foreigners in their oppression and flay the people robbing them of their flesh and blood to give those to the foreigners then some one else must follow Li Pai Jen and throw away his own life by bomb-throwing and so repay the Syndicate! . . .'"

The little missionary was sitting up very straight now. Her voice had deepened in timbre. Her eyes blazed with militant spirit.

"We beat them," she went on. "After ten years of manoeuvering the Syndicate gave it up — pulled out. But they left a wreck behind them, a wreck of our work and our hopes. There aren't two other provinces in all the eighteen that hate foreigners and — yes — Christianity as Shansi hates them. In 1900 they killed a hundred and sixty of our people — every white man, woman, and child that was in the province at the time. They nearly did it again in 1907. We had to start all over then, for the third time, teaching them that Christianity doesn't mean greed, bribery, plunder. We've had to be so very, very patient. And now these exploiters are at it again, working through the new government, taking advantage of the unsettled conditions. Blumstein has never stopped watching Shansi. He wants that wonderful anthracite coal — and the iron. The great civilized Christian world wants that iron and coal. They will bribe, steal, murder — they will devastate a people — but they want that iron and coal."

She threw back the bedclothes and swung her feet around, groping for her slippers.

"Oh, please," Edith murmured, "you mustn't tire yourself! Do lie down again."

But the little missionary merely reached for a wrap and drew it about her shoulders. It was a Japanese scarf of crêpe silk, a soft gray in color, fringed at the ends, and exquisitely embroidered with trailing wistaria blossoms, also in gray. Then she smiled gently and replied:

"No, dear. I must get up and dress. I can't lie abed here — not with Simon Blumstein in T'ai Yuan. I'm sorry to be inhospitable. Oh," — the blue eyes began flashing again,— "oh, if I only had some money! With five hundred dollars I could beat Blumstein."

Miss Austin's eyes widened. "*You* could beat him?" she repeated, wondering.

The missionary compressed her lips and nodded. "I could do it. If I had the money. It's a matter of new petitions and runners and traveling expenses for a dozen workers and a big meeting at T'ai Yuan — yes, a meeting will do it. And such things cost *some* money, even in China. And, of course, I can't be active myself. Mr. Harbison won't let me. He is afraid of trouble. They're all afraid."

She had been staring out of the window as she spoke. Now she turned and looked at the rather bewildered face of the girl before her.

"I'm afraid I run away with you, dear," she said gently. "I forget that you don't know these people as I do. Everything is confused now, since the revolution. The people are tired, and poor, and worried. And they don't know about it. Without leadership they will do nothing; and all those who might lead are fixed. It is not so different, my dear, from our home public — only worse; and they are incredibly poorer and more timid. . . . Blumstein has got the officials, of course, here and at T'ai Yuan. They have his money and the promise of more; and they'll let him do whatever he can on his own, just so long as he doesn't stir up trouble. But they won't back him in a crisis. They can't. If we can only show some real popular opposition, those canny old mandarins will have to be with us or lose face. . . . Oh!" she sighed — "with a little money, a little leadership, a little organization, posters on all the highways for a hundred miles out of T'ai Yuan, a big public meeting, just one more mighty effort — just to make it *look* as if the people are still guarding their rights ——"

She flung out her thin white arms in a gesture of intense but despairing nervous energy, compressed her lips again, and got to her feet.

Edith sprang up and took her arm. "What are you going to do, Rhoda dear?"

"Get into my clothes — write some letters — pack up."

Edith knit her brows. "But — but, anyway, you can't go to T'ai Yuan now."

"No — not until morning, worse luck! But I can't lie another minute in that bed."

"But, Rhoda dear, if you haven't the money, what good would it do?"

The little missionary steadied herself by the foot of the bed, and looked at Edith. "I don't know," she murmured; and there was a hoarseness in her voice. She pressed her hands to her temples. "I don't seem able to think clearly. Here is my fifteen years' fight going to nothing before my eyes — and, somehow, I'm failing to meet the emergency!"

Miss Austin was stirring with indignation against her Uncle Frank. Why need he mix in this miserable exploitation of a weaker people? Then, in a flash, it came to her that the business of life, to which he was so passionately devoted, was precisely that — exploiting weaker peoples. He had talked enthusiastically — between platitudes — of the wonderful "opportunities for development" in Shansi. Now suddenly she knew what he meant. He meant bribery, stealth, sharp dealing in the letter of contracts, diplomatic trickery.

"Would a hundred dollars help?" asked Edith suddenly.

Miss Eavesby smiled sadly and shook her head. "Bless your heart, Edith — no. A small amount would be wasted. I said five hundred — but it would take rather more than less."

"I couldn't possibly raise another cent without going to Uncle Frank," mused Edith; "and he is on the other side. We can't ask him to put up money to defeat himself. No; we're fighting him." And she sighed.

"I want you to have this," said Miss Eavesby, a little later, folding the wistaria scarf with a loving touch and laying it on Edith's suit-case.

"You want me — Why, my dear, I wouldn't *think* ——"

The little missionary laid her hand on Edith's arm. "Please! I bought it for myself; and it was wrong. I want you to have it."

"But, my dear ——"

"I've been caring for myself, gratifying myself; and all the time they needed me in Shansi!" She shook her head again, and for a little time went on with the business of dressing. Edith, in some bewilderment, sat watching her.

Finally the missionary came and took her by the shoulders, resting her cheek lightly on Edith's abundant fluffy hair. When she spoke, her voice was unsteady. "It's the wrongest thing I do," she said, "clinging to my pretty things. It always blinds me. Every now and again, when I feel strong, I give them all away; then, the first thing I know, I'm tempted again, and I weaken. I want you to take it, Edith dear. I bought it in a fit of wilfulness. It's the only thing I've kept, this year, except my funny camel. That's out at the mission in T'ai Yuan; and, anyway, it isn't beautiful — just quaint. It's nothing anybody would ever want, except me. Take this, please — because I ask you to."

So Miss Austin packed the scarf among her own things in the wicker suit-case.

"What is this camel?" asked Miss Austin, turning away from the window and making an effort to speak in a casual tone.

"Oh, just a pottery image. It was given me by an old Chinese gentleman of Taiku whom we cured of the opium habit."

"Has it any glaze — or color?"

The little missionary knit her brows. "Why — yes, I believe it has. At least, it isn't rough clay, like some of those old things. What are you getting at, Edith?"

"Nothing."

"You are wondering if it has a value." She sighed. "If it had, I would have sold it long ago. Even though it was a present. You see, dear, it is only the beautiful pieces that are worth anything — the vases and such. My poor camel is just an old brown thing. Oh, it would bring a little something — five, ten, twenty-five dollars, even. Though I doubt it. You can buy all sorts and sizes of pottery and bronze animals for that. Why, even if it were ivory, it wouldn't fetch nearly enough. And it *isn't* ivory."

Miss Austin made no reply. Memories of colored plates in her uncle's quarto volumes on Chinese porcelains were passing in a confused series before her mind's eye. But she had only impressions, no exact knowledge. "If I only *knew!*" she thought.

"Come," said the little missionary, as if with a sudden resolution, "let's waste no more thought on useless notions. I've made up my mind. Blumstein is going to beat me at last; but when the beating comes I shall be in T'ai Yuan to take it. You've been a dear, Edith; I hate to leave you this way. But I've got to take the early train to-morrow."

Miss Austin sat on the edge of the bed, picked up little Wing and cuddled him against her cheek.

"I'm going with you," she said.

"Oh, no, my child!"

Edith nodded. Her eyes were glistening.

"But it's impossible. It might be actually unsafe."

"How about yourself?"

"That's different."

"Why? How?"

"I'm pledged to the service. It's my work."

"Well," said Edith, slowly and with emotion, "it's about time I was a *little* use — to somebody or something. I never have been yet. You have at least two degrees of fever right now. You need a nurse, that's what you need. If you insist, after I get you safely to T'ai Yuan, I'll join aunt and uncle, take my scolding, and come back with them. But you sha'n't go a step without me."

The little missionary looked thoughtfully at the determined, pretty face.

"I oughtn't to let you go," she said.

"You aren't letting me," replied Edith. And she smiled excitedly as she turned away. Girllike, she had not given all her reasons. She was going to T'ai Yuan Fu to see that camel.

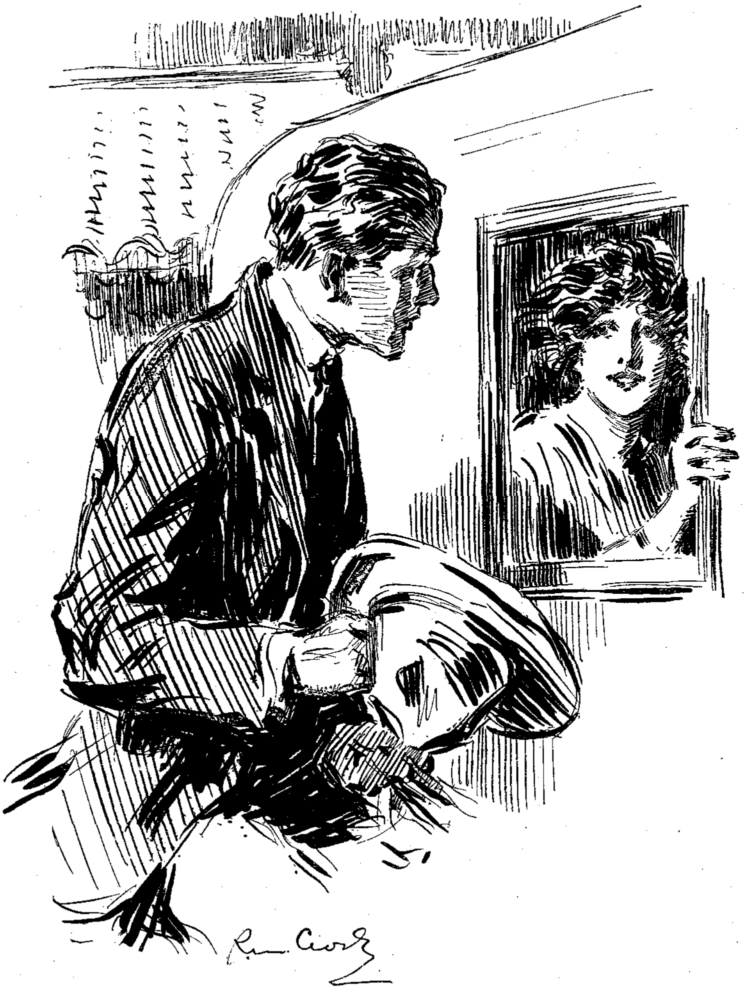
They went south on the Hankow "local" the following morning, in a spring rain that drove incessantly against the windows of their dingy compartment. At Chingting they changed from the main line to the narrow-gage T'ai Yuan Fu line; and climbed, twisting and crawling along earthen precipices and creeping timidly over doubtful bridges that spanned swollen streams, into and over the terraced brown hills of Shansi. Late in the afternoon the train slid cautiously down into a wide valley where there were forts, and frequent villages, and twin pagodas, all misty-looking behind the sheets of rain, and glimpses of a city with high masonry walls and huge gate-towers. They were hustled across a crowded platform by Miss Eavesby's wrinkled servant, "Oldjohn," to covered rickshaws, and drawn for a long time over rough streets with a great many turns. Then Miss Austin found herself in a modern brick house, talking to a Mr. and Mrs. Harbison, who had patient, kindly faces and tired eyes. Finally she and her little missionary were shown into adjoining bedrooms to change their wet clothing, sip tea, and rest.

An hour later, Edith was writing with a fountain-pen in her diary, when Miss Eavesby entered the room carrying a square wooden box. Edith was shocked to observe how frail and white she looked.

"Oh, my dear," cried Edith reproachfully, "you ought to be resting! How on earth am I going to keep you off your feet? You'll simply break down, dear!"

The missionary carefully deposited the box on the foot of the bed, and sat beside it.

"Mr. Harbison tells me that the province is all confusion," she said slowly. "There's no more public spirit — the revolution exhausted that. There's no trade to speak of. Robber bands are still prowling everywhere outside the cities; they've burned one of the Baptist posts between here and Sian Fu. The officials, like all the others, are looking out for themselves. It is the perfect time for the Blumstein-Wilberly group! They're working fast — or as fast as you can work in China. Mr. Harbison says the new papers will be signed within two weeks, and the work will begin within a month. And I can't raise my hand — can't raise my hand! It would take me days and days, even if I had the money to work with."



"'WHY, EVERYBODY IN THE WORLD HAS BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU FOR THREE DAYS!' HE CRIED"

She sighed, and for a moment studied the delicate needlework on Miss Austin's kimono, even reached forward and absently fingered the thin silk. "That's Kioto embroidery," she mused. Then she went on: "I'm going to send you up to join your uncle and aunt the first thing to-morrow, Edith. It's safer. You see, the governor himself is protecting them. It's nearly a day's ride, by mule-litter. They're in the hills, up north, stopping with Mr. Greene, Blumstein's chief engineer."

Miss Austin was looking at her with unconscious intentness. "You're perfectly sure," she said, "there's nothing you can do?"

"Just one thing," replied the little missionary, with a faint smile. "There's a bit of my wrong side left. It's in that box."

She slid the cover off, and took out a large object wrapped in many thicknesses of cloth. These she carefully unrolled, one by one. "No," she said, with a wistful note in her voice, and a faint, sad smile; "it isn't beautiful, but —" And she held up her treasure, slowly turning it around and around before Edith's startled eyes.

It was a curious piece of pottery — a Bactrian camel perhaps fifteen inches in height, mounted on a flat base of the same material. The strong, shaggy body, the muscles of flank and leg, the spreading, pad-like feet, were there to the life. The long, sagging neck, fringed with hair, curved up to a head that was thrown back — the mouth open and angry, the eyes flashing. But the extraordinary fidelity of the modeling was even less striking than the rich, glassy, golden-brown color that paled to a creamy yellow on the two humps. If the image had lain, as was possible, for unnumbered centuries in a grave of Shansi or Shensi, it had somehow been protected from earthy incrustations.

Edith took it in her hands. Oh, that color! Was it brown, after all? Was there not a deep "biscuit" red under the glazed surface? It was warm; it glowed.

"Do you like it?" asked the little missionary.

"Oh, my dear," — there was a catch of sheer excitement in Edith's voice,— "my dear, it is" — with a deliberate effort, she controlled herself — "it is fascinating!"

"I want you to have it, then."

Edith could not trust herself at all now. She said nothing; merely looked at Rhoda Eavesby out of big, humid eyes. She glanced again at the camel. What *were* some of the distinguishing characteristics of those early dynastic periods — Sung, Yuan, T'ang, even the ancient Han? "No false alarms," ran her thoughts. "Not a word until I *know!*"

"I'm glad you like it," said the little missionary, and flitted back to her own room.

After dinner, Edith remarked:

"If you don't mind, Rhoda dear, I will start early in the morning. Even if it clears up, the roads will be bad. I may need the extra time."

"I'll order the litter around for six-thirty, if you say so," replied the missionary simply.

Edith did a moment's calculating; then nodded.

They went to bed early; but sleep was slow in quieting Miss Austin's racing mind. At midnight she was still propped up in bed, writing in her diary. This was *some* relief.

> I feel like a burglar [she wrote]. I'm living at this minute every known kind of lie. But I'm sure it's right. It must be. They'd never let me do it if they knew. And then, this way, if I'm all wrong about it, nobody will be hurt.
>
> There's a train leaving for Chingting and Peking at seven-thirty to-morrow morning. On that train will be Miss Edith Austin, accompanied by a wicker suit-case, a square wooden box, and a very small dog. To-morrow night at this time I shall be in Peking—sleeping, maybe. And, unless I'm greatly mistaken, on the morning of day after to-morrow Mr. Heatherington's old porcelain merchant in the Ha Ta High Street will be transacting business with little me.

It was very romantic and satisfactory, early the next morning, to stand at the compound gate in the bright sunlight, and watch the strange, gay little caravan coming up the muddy street from somewhere, surely, far off in the Arabian Nights, to carry her (or so it had been planned) into the northern hills. The litter in which she was to ride was a big Sedan chair suspended between two mules. It had a curving roof, and latticed windows in front and at the sides. It was covered with bright red and blue cloth. And, delight of delights! there were tinkly little bells on the saddles of the mules. Then, there was a pack-animal for her suit-case, a burro for Oldjohn, who was to act as her escort and dragoman, and two hard-faced muleteers. As she glanced at these latter persons Edith thrilled with a delicious horror. Surely, between jobs, they were at least brigands.

She was seated now on cushions in her palanquin — Wing cuddled in her lap, the box that (her secret) was to save Shansi beside her on the cushioned seat. The little missionary, who had insisted on dressing and coming down, kissed her good-by. She had blue rings under her eyes, and was white. It wrung Edith's heart to look at her. Mr. and Mrs. Harbison, who had breakfasted with her, shook hands cordially.

Oldjohn mounted his burro. The less villainous of the two muleteers raised his whip. Then Mr. Harbison, with a sudden recollection, stepped to the window of the litter.

"Why," he exclaimed, "I entirely forgot to tell you! I *am* sleepy. A message reached us just before midnight, saying that, not three hours after your train came through yesterday, five bridges went out along the railway, or were at least undermined. It will be two or three weeks before they can get any trains through. It is fortunate that you are to be with your own relatives and under such special protection — for you are certainly marooned in Shansi. . . . Good-by. A pleasant trip!"

The muleteers cracked their whips; the mules plunged forward; and the cavalcade swung off on its way to the northern hills, between gray walls of sun-dried bricks and low, curving roofs of gray tile, and past early carts of merchandise.

But of her surroundings Miss Austin saw nothing. Her heart had all but stopped beating. Her usually clear, if unformed, mind was groping in utter bewilderment.

No trains! No trains for two or three weeks! And Mr. Simon Blumstein, of the Blumstein-Wilberly group, moving directly (if with some necessary Oriental deliberation) toward a private but unassailably official settlement of the little misunderstanding over the Shansi mines. And she herself, with that precious wooden box, to be delivered over to her aunt and uncle before this day's sun should set,— no escaping that now! — to sit by, rebuked, defeated, a mere saddened spectator of the quiet little climax to Rhoda Eavesby's life drama that had been, Chinese fashion, fifteen years in the playing.

But wait a minute! She sat up rigidly in the swaying car, clinging to the sides with tense hands. Was the railroad so necessary? Didn't the missionary people travel freely all over these interior provinces? Surely! And in the very sort of vehicle which was now hers to command. She sat thinking — thinking. She thought of wrinkled Oldjohn back there astraddle of that absurd little burro, with his toes trailing the mud of the street. He was responsible for her; he could not, in any circumstances short of death itself, evade that responsibility; but he was also a servant, and must obey her. That, she knew well enough, was the Chinese of it. At the worst, it could take only a few extra days — there might yet be time. It would be a wild plunge into the unknown — *but there might yet be time!*

They were emerging from the city streets outside the wall into the open country of the Fen Ho Valley. She called to the older muleteer to stop. He understood, and obeyed. Oldjohn came riding absurdly up to the window, with a few extra and inquiring wrinkles on his face.

"No can go this side, Oldjohn," she said decisively. "Go other way. Go Chingting — Peking side. Savvy?"

Oldjohn's face went blank; his parchment eyelids fluttered. "Go Peking side!" he muttered; then shook his head energetically. "No can do! No can do!"

But Miss Austin insisted.

Oldjohn tried to explain. They had no provisions, no water. There was no folding cot for the lady. It was three days' travel by the highway, even to Pingting; and the roads would be impassable.

"Go back," he suggested, with a sinking heart. "Go back. See lady."

Miss Austin shook her head, and frowned. "Peking side," she said calmly.

Oldjohn was beaten. Tremblingly he instructed the muleteers. There was sudden argument; voices were raised; a crowd gathered and swelled the discussion. But Miss Austin simply waited. . . . Finally they turned off on a side road. Oldjohn, muttering, dropped behind.

They passed the series of forts and the twin pagodas. They climbed slowly, slowly, step by step, hour by hour, into the hills. They were in the sunken roads by noon, floundering along a muddy cañon ten, twenty, forty feet beneath the cultivated plateaus of the hill country. They passed camel trains from Mongolia, Kansuh, and Thibet. They forded swollen rivulets, and slipped excitingly on the brink of more than one precipice.

There were quarrels and arguments on the road. There were villages in which naked children and "chow" dogs played and snarled in swarms. There were ragged groups of riper years, that crowded close and shouted at the bold, beautiful white woman who exhibited herself shamefully, without escort, in an open litter. At times the girl's expressive hazel eyes rang the changes from calm to almost unbearable excitement, from trembling timidity to hearty, wholesome American anger.

Railway or no railway, this was still the ancient Peking-Thibet road, where innumerable camels and mules still churned the mud and ground up the caking dust and helped the most vital highway of all history to eat its way deeper and deeper down below the fruitful plateaus. And at intervals, all day long, while this fascinating pageant of old Asiatic life and times was impressing itself with bewildering variety on the quick negative of Edith's young mind, the younger of the muleteers sang, as he plodded along the road or swung himself up to the back of the pack-animal, a quavering, endless melody. Edith wondered, glancing timidly out at his villainous face, if he were singing of love.

At about seven in the evening they entered the square gateway of a village inn, and waited in the courtyard. Tattered coolies lounged about, studying the beautiful foreign woman with insolent eyes. In one corner a little girl was trudging round and round a primitive stone mill, grinding out the morrow's supply of flour. In another corner an itinerant barber had set down his stool and tripod, and was at the moment deftly scraping the inner side of a young man's eyelid.

Edith wanted to rub her eyes. Here she was, suddenly set down in the midst of actual Chinese life, with everything going on naturally and simply, as it had gone on for thousands of years. From one of the cell-like rooms on her right came a haunting minor melody of the Orient, played on some sort of reed instrument. At the doorway of another appeared a slim, calm young Chinaman in a blue gown, eating rice from a blue-and-white bowl with chop-sticks. "Why, he's positively good-looking!" thought Edith.

Oldjohn now appeared beside her car. With some prodding and much chatter, the bearer mules were brought to the ground. Miss Austin stooped low and stepped out of the litter; and Oldjohn, with much shaking of the head, escorted her up the steps of the building at the end of the court.

When Edith found herself actually within the structure, and took in the grimy woodwork, the aged, crumbling plaster, the heaps of dirt in the corners, the single bent-wood chair and primitive table, and the brick platform at one end, covered with a square of dirty matting, that was clearly the *kang*, or bed, the excited shine left her eyes and her face blanched. A charcoal brazier, set in a corner, filled the apartment with gaseous fumes.

"It *is* pretty bad," she thought. But Oldjohn was watching her, and she collected herself.

For food that evening she had only rice, eggs, and tea, prepared by Oldjohn's hand. She was thirsty; but the water, she knew, like the vegetables, might easily mean death.

She was tired from travel, and still more from excitement. The eleven hours of swinging and jolting in the litter had left her with an ache for every bone. But she could not look at the brick bed and its brown matting without a sinking of the heart. She dropped into the uncomfortable chair to think. Then, with a sudden rush of timidity, she tried to fasten the door, which hung loosely by one leather hinge. There had once been a latch; but, like all China, it had fallen into decay. By exerting all her strength she contrived to move the table over against it.

She returned to the slippery chair. The evening wore slowly on. She fell to dozing, but was awakened over and over again by the mysterious stirrings and crunchings of the animals in the open stable, or by the banging of the watchman's gong as he made his frequent rounds to frighten robbers away.

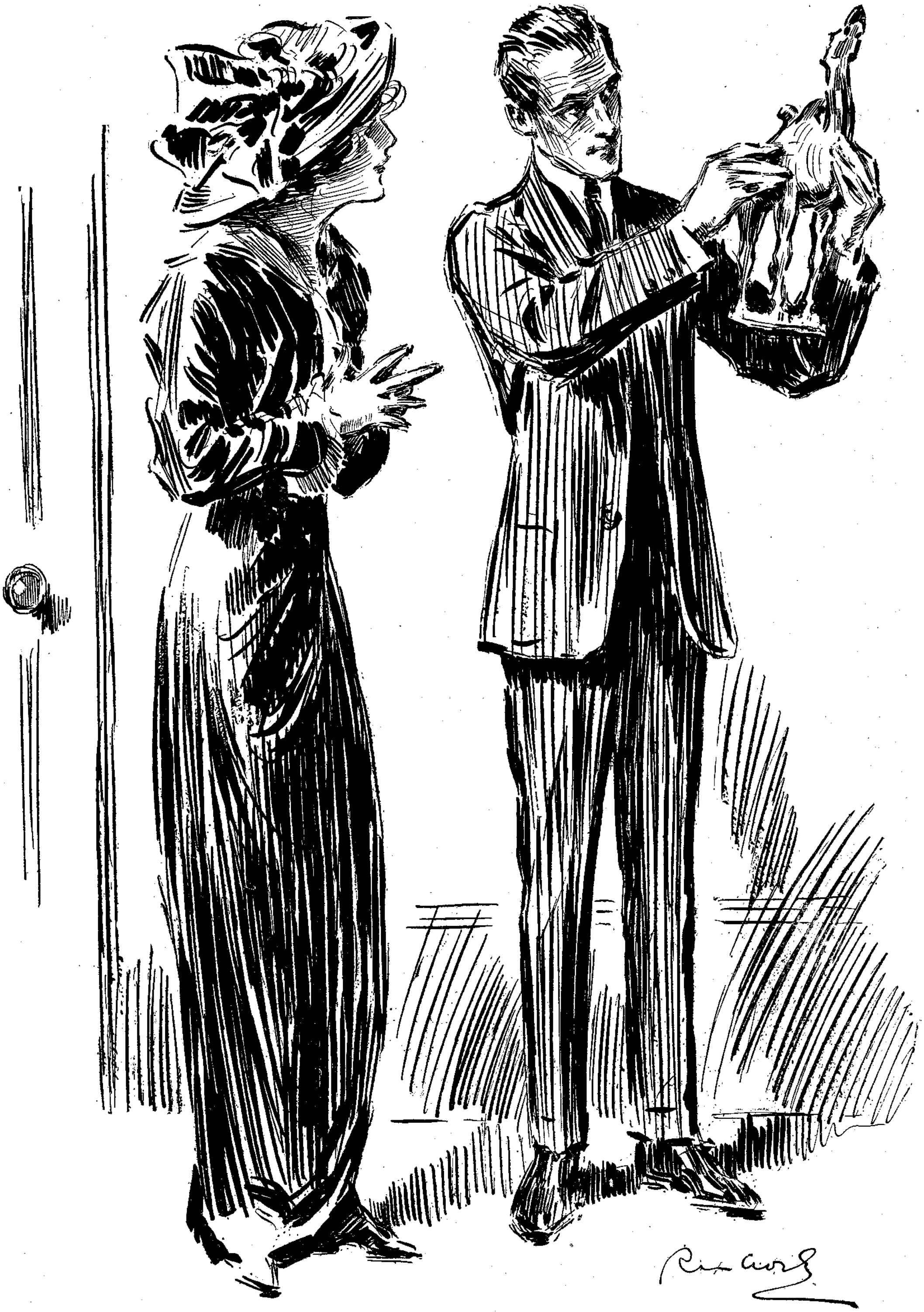
What if robbers *should* come! Rhoda had said that the province was still overrun with them. How about the hundred and sixty whites that had been killed within the province not a dozen years before? And what were the hideous faces that came into her dream-vision — brown faces with horrible mouths and slanting, squinting eyes? It was all so strange — "like going into another star," she thought once, when the faces had frightened her awake. "That's it — like being on another star. A different kind of people; a different kind of life. You could never tell them at home. You couldn't compare it with anything they know about. You couldn't make them see it."

Then, half sick from the suffocating air, she got up and thrust her small fist through every one of the paper squares that she could reach, and put her face close to one of the openings and breathed in the sweet spring air.

Outside, the moon was shining, just as she had so often seen it shine at home. The courtyard was bathed in the pale light. Now that she could see it all, it seemed very quiet, very peaceful. Even the stirring and crunching of the animals took on a friendly sound. And she went back to her chair, and to a sort of slumber, her untrained young imagination stirred by the age-old mystery of the East — of the peaceable-bloodthirsty, silent-noisy, hideous-beautiful East.

There were telegraph wires extending in various directions through Shansi Province. One of these wires, the one leading from T'ai Yuan to Chief Engineer Greene's compound in the northern hills, was humming and singing at intervals throughout that night.

For Miss Edith Austin, attended only by an aged Chinese servant and two unknown muleteers, had, while on her way north from T'ai Yuan, disappeared off the face of the earth. At about two hours after midnight the first search party, in charge of Mr. Greene himself, struck south to rouse every village on the T'ai Yuan road. Within an hour, two other parties, in charge of young instrument men, had left to scour the hills, each carrying a trustworthy interpreter and a week's rations on pack-animals. At five, the patient, overworked Mr. Harbison started north, with his own servant and an escort of twelve turbaned soldiers from the yamen of the provincial judge. In his pocket burned and sizzled a long message from Mr. Wilberly, in which that sometimes irascible business man had minced no words in expressing his opinion of one particular missionary for sending off Miss Edith Austin virtually alone, quite as if she were one of those young missionary women.



"'ISN'T IT WONDERFUL!' SHE BREATHED, IN AN EXCITED WHISPER. 'IT'S A HAN PIECE!'"

By six o'clock in the morning, the provincial judge, the treasurer, and the governor himself were assembled in the governor's council room to discuss measures. For the killing of foreigners had come to be an expensive luxury.

And all night Mrs. Wilberly lay, querulous, moaning even, on her bed, while her fat husband walked the floor, ran excitedly outside to hurry up the searching parties, walked the floor again.

Breakfast was not cold before Peking, mysteriously, knew the story. The New York *Herald* man instantly bought an exclusive right to the Shansi wires from an obliging official, who promptly sold the same privilege to the Associated Press and to one or two Middle Western papers. The A. P. man, suspecting this duplicity as a matter of course, sent his assistant to the temporary end of the railway at Pingting, instructed to use his judgment on the field. And this last person, eagerly taken in by three lonely young engineers of the North China Development Company (Simon Blumstein, managing director) resident at that point, entertained them with tales of the beauty and charm of the American girl whose tragic disappearance had set the civilized world ablaze.

It was late on the second day following the appearance of the A. P. man at Pingting that the youngest of the three resident engineers was riding his Manchu pony at an easy canter along the hillside toward the village. He was a pleasant-appearing Texan of twenty-five or so. A small Boston bull trotted at the pony's heels.

The Manchu pony sidled around a tangle of carts, then shied away from a group of resting camels. The act caused him to brush against a red-and-blue mule-litter just ahead.

"Here, Singsing," said the engineer, "what are you trying to do? Behave yourself!"

There was a rustle and a sort of gasp within the litter. A very pleasing voice cried, "Oh!" The latticed window swung open, and a face appeared — the exceedingly attractive face of a girl of twenty or twenty-one, rather pale and forlorn, but with pretty hazel eyes and the beginnings of a shy, startled smile.

The young engineer stared for a moment in utter confusion; then he removed his broad gray hat, and blushed.

The girl smiled. Never in her life had she seen so complete a blush as that.

"You — you're Miss Austin!" he breathed.

"Why, yes, that's my name," she replied; "but how on earth did you know?"

He looked at her in a sort of stupid amazement. "How did I know?" he repeated after her. "Why, everybody in the world has been looking for you for three days."

"No — really!" Her brows puckered. Then suddenly she shut her lips tight, and glanced down, rather anxiously, at a square wooden box by her side. "Perhaps you'll be good enough to show me where the best inn is," she said. "In those other towns I'm sure I had the worst."

"I will — gladly," he replied, and directed the muleteers toward the compound of the engineers farther up the hill.

"And oh!" she cried, catching sight of the bulldog and suddenly remembering, "*do* you suppose there's such a thing as a dog biscuit to be had? I've had to feed poor Wing on 'most any old thing."

There was an hour of bustle and confusion in the compound on the hill; then Miss Austin found herself in complete possession of a small house, with a devoted and ancient Chinese woman to wait on her. Dinner was sent in by Oldjohn — a curry of chicken, real potatoes, canned peas, canned butter, and coffee — actually coffee!

It was not until she had insisted with some vehemence that she really was not tired that the four young Americans, delightfully nice boys, permitted her to join them in the living-room, and talk about things back home, and listen to Sousa and Harry Lauder and Blanche Ring on the talking-machine.

The A. P. man accompanied her to Peking the next morning. He offered to carry the wooden box that she handled with such care; but she shook her head and gave him Wing instead.

He tried to ask a few leading questions. But always, when he had led nicely up to the subject, she would turn her big, demure eyes on him and innocently explain that she had gone out from Peking because Miss Eavesby was ill, and had never intended anything but coming directly back. There had evidently been a misunderstanding somewhere. Of course, if she had realized how much of a journey it was — Still, she couldn't for the life of her see why everybody was making such a tremendous fuss. The missionary girls went everywhere alone.

As they said good-by at the entrance to the Peking hotel, the A. P. man looked thoughtfully at her. She was carrying that box herself, and it looked heavy. "There's a story here somewhere," he told himself,—"a wonderful story. But" — he glanced at the long, straight nose and the odd, firm set to the pretty chin — "nobody will ever get it. Not ever."

It was just after tea-time in the big hotel. Miss Austin hurried through the "lounge" without stopping to speak to any of the acquaintances who looked up at her with startled eyes as she passed. The Oldhams were in a far corner, but she made a point of not seeing them. Mr. Henry Carpenter was sitting comfortably back in a big chair, deep in the columns of the Tientsin *Critic*. She returned his friendly smile with a bright little jerk of her head, hesitated a moment as if designing to speak to him, then hurried on to her room. She liked Mr. Carpenter. Perhaps he would help her.

Once in her room, she tore off her gloves, picked up a certain quarto work on Chinese porcelains, and swiftly turned the pages. One of the colored plates arrested her attention. She studied it closely. Then she got the precious parcel from its box, removed the wrappings, propped the book open on the table, and stood the camel beside the colored plate. Unmistakably, the image and the picture were identical.

She hastily penciled a chit to Henry Carpenter:

> Please come out into the corridor, away from the crowd. I want to see you. Very important.
>
> EDITH AUSTIN.

Then, and not until then, did she take a few simple measures to make herself presentable after her journey

Mr. Carpenter was waiting outside her door when she opened it. Without a word she handed him the camel.

He turned it slowly around in his hands, held it up to the light, studied modeling and color, examined the base for marks; then lowered it and softly whistled.

"Isn't it wonderful!" she breathed, in an excited whisper. "It's a Han piece. I've looked it up."

"It certainly appears to be — possibly of the Han time, certainly not later than the T'ang. It is in perfect condition." He fingered it gently, studying the undertones of the color with the loving gaze of a connoisseur, then raised his eyes to hers. "It wouldn't surprise me, Miss Austin, to learn that it is the most beautiful very old piece in the world."

"I've got to sell it, Mr. Carpenter. How much do you think it will bring?"

He knit his brows. "Almost any amount. It is a perfect specimen. And it is — let me see! — fifteen hundred to two thousand years old. At speculative Fifth Avenue prices —" He pursed his lips, calculating.

"Now listen," said Miss Austin. "Will you do this for me? Will you take it over to that merchant in the Ha Ta High Street and make him buy it — right now? There's simply no time to lose. I wouldn't ask you; only — only — it's really very important."

"Of course," said he thoughtfully, "you won't get your price if you try to hurry it."

She shook her head. "I can't wait. If you can get from five to eight hundred dollars, gold, take it."

"But the thing is worth ——"

"I know it, Mr. Carpenter; but please hurry!" She suddenly smiled, and looked up at him with an excited twinkle in her eyes. "Isn't it dreadful, the way I'm ordering you around!"

His face expanded in a grin. "Now, wait — let's think a minute," said he. "I don't believe that fellow will pay cash. He'll want to sell it on commission. I'll tell you what! I'll underwrite it up to, say, eight hundred. Then we'll let him sell it later for what he can, take out his commission, repay me, and hand you whatever surplus there may be. That way, you can have the eight hundred to-night. And — wait; don't object! It's the safest kind of a speculation for me. If I were buying porcelains, I'd gladly pay a thousand cash for it, as a pure investment."

Accordingly, the very next morning Miss Austin sent Oldjohn back to T'ai Yuan, bearing a Chinese draft for eight hundred dollars (less ten per cent to the Chinese bankers).

Then she waited. Telegrams passed between her uncle and herself, but these were explanatory and personal; none related to the business affairs of the North China Development Company. Days slipped by — a week — nearly two weeks. Then, one morning, Miss Austin picked up a copy of the Tientsin *Critic*, and hit upon the following item:

> Mr. Simon Blumstein and party are reported as about to return from T'ai Yuan Fu, where they have been inspecting the properties of the company. At the Tientsin office it was said yesterday that a mass meeting of the so-called "Gentry and People" of Shansi was held a day earlier at the provincial capital, at which was developed so much fanatical opposition to the company that Mr. Blumstein considers it unwise to press the work at the present time.

That evening Mr. and Mrs. Wilberly were back, sitting at the table with the Oldhams and their niece (who felt pleasantly conspicuous in the crowded dining-room) quite as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened.

"My dear child,"— this from Mrs. Wilberly, the next day at tiffin,— "you've no idea, all we've been through! You did frighten me almost to death. And your uncle feels very badly about it, Edith."

Miss Austin looked up in some surprise. "Uncle does! Why?"

"Oh, he thinks that you were hurt by what he said to you — that last evening here, just before we went away. He feels that is why you made that frightful journey back, after you took your sick missionary out there, instead of coming straight to us, as you should have."

Miss Austin poised her coffee-cup in air, and looked inscrutably across it at her aunt.

"How does Uncle Frank feel about the failure of his business plans?" she asked.

"Oh, more relieved than anything else. Glad to be out of it. He says this is no country for a plain American. The Chinese are too subtle, too — what was the word? — too 'devious' in their methods. He said only this morning that, as a business man, he has sense enough to know when he's beaten and it's time to cut losses. And now that he has learned his lesson, he is prepared to start back home and feel contented about it. I'm so glad. I'm tired to death of living in a trunk. I do wish you would try to be nice to your uncle, Edith. It would make him more — " She did not finish.

There are but two brief episodes to set down here. They seem pertinent.

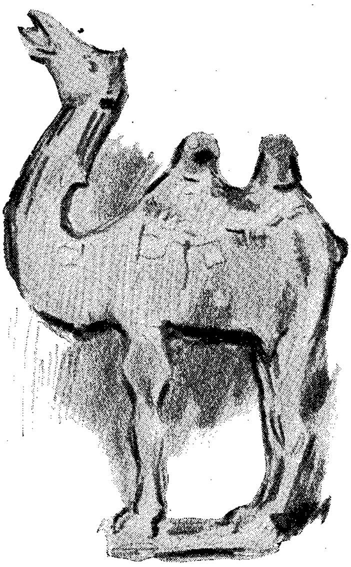
Directly after tiffin Miss Austin observed Mr. Carpenter standing near the hotel office, with his hands in his pockets and the faintest suspicion of a smile on his lean, shrewd face. Surmising that he was waiting for herself, she moved casually toward him.

He glanced about to make sure that they were not observed; then said, very quietly:

"Please look unconscious at what I'm going to tell you. The camel is sold. I can't find out what it brought — the old merchant won't give up any information about the size of his commission. But he admits a thousand net on our account. That's eight hundred for me and two hundred for you. Some kind friend has unwittingly financed your campaign for you. Here is your surplus." He slipped a heavy little bag into her hand.

The second episode was as follows:

Late on this same afternoon Mr. Wilberly appeared about the hotel in jocular mood. Edith found him looking at her knowingly, and constantly fighting back a mysterious smile. She began to wonder a little.



Later, when she said good night, he walked down the corridor with her, and lingered at her door. Finally he broke out:

"You'll find a little package in your room, Edith. It isn't much. You'll laugh — I fell for Heatherington's merchant, after all. But he assures me that *this* piece has never been out of the country. And that's one thing, you know; you can take the word of a responsible Chinese merchant. The Chinese *are* truthful."

There was a square wooden box on the table directly beside the bag of gold that Edith had carelessly dropped there after tiffin. Edith opened it, and took out a thick bundle of soft cloths. As she stripped them off, the lumpy object within felt familiar in her hands. She hesitated. But her uncle was waiting there in the doorway for his thanks. She took off another of the cloths. There was a pounding in her temples. She wanted to laugh, to cry, to scream.

But outwardly she presented a quiet, very charming picture of girlhood — graceful and slim in her light evening gown, Rhoda Eavesby's wistaria scarf about her shoulders, her arms bare and white, her oval face slightly flushed. She stripped off the last cloth; and there it lay in her hand — her own golden-brown camel, Rhoda Eavesby's camel, the ——

Her uncle was speaking from the doorway:

"It's a genuine Han piece — very fine specimen. There probably isn't another such perfect piece in the known world — certainly not outside the British Museum."

When she had thanked him as well as she could, and he had gone and the door was shut, she dropped helplessly on the couch and gazed at the lustrous bit of pottery.

"Yes," she mused weakly, "the Chinese *are* truthful. . . . And life, take it one way and another, is mixed."

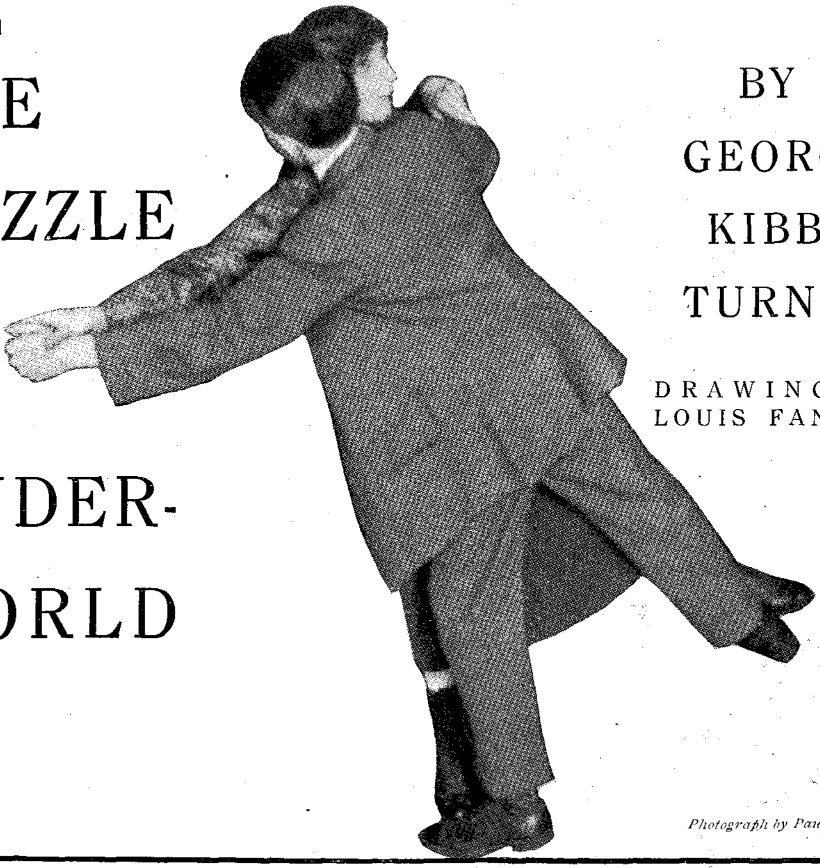
After which profoundly philosophical observation, she soberly undressed and went to bed, with the quarto work on porcelains propped against her knees, and Wing cuddled close where he could, from time to time, lick her hand.

"WILLIAM OF EAST ORANGE" IS THE TITLE OF MR. MERWIN'S STORY FOR AUGUST — DESCRIBING MISS AUSTIN'S ADVENTURE ON THE FAMOUS 29-HOUR EXPRESS FROM PEKING TO HANKOW

THE PUZZLE OF THE UNDER-WORLD

BY GEORGE KIBBE TURNER

DRAWINGS BY LOUIS FANCHER



Photograph by Paul Thompson

> "*FEW people realize how far the destinies of a great city are taken charge of by the Idle Boy. The one place where votes form naturally in bunches, ready to the hand of the professional politician, is in the gangs of youths just coming into manhood. And the apprentice politician who takes charge of them is the Idle Boy, the physical and social leader of these gangs. By natural sequence he graduates into charge of the city government*"

MONTH after month the United States Army officer and the New England school-teacher, who were directing the New York police five years ago, looked into their card catalogues and maps of crime and saw a significant thing. From one small spot on the East Side of New York crime arose and spread all over the city, like pestilence from a swamp.

Around Chatham Square and the lower Bowery were the ancient dens of thieves, older than the memory of living men. There was the saloon of the old pickpockets, the yeggs' dingy meeting-place and post-office, kept by the "dope fiend" and banker of criminals, from which the tramp burglars started out to break country safes all over the United States. There were the nightly "hang-outs" of the misshapen lumps of beggars, the noisy rendezvous of the paid ruffians and professional murderers. A few blocks to the west were the resorts of the Italian bomb-men and counterfeiters and "white slavers"; a few blocks to the east, the coffee rooms, from which the young pickpockets and "cadets" and prostitutes sallied forth to invade the regions of the prosperous upper West Side. It was the center of the under-world of the city, never yet disturbed.

From time to time an impulse came to Commissioner Bingham and his deputy, Woods: Why not smash the nests of this thing? Why not destroy the holes from which, year after year, crime had crawled out and spread over the city? The moment this was proposed, the detective force — and the best and most conscientious men on it — protested.

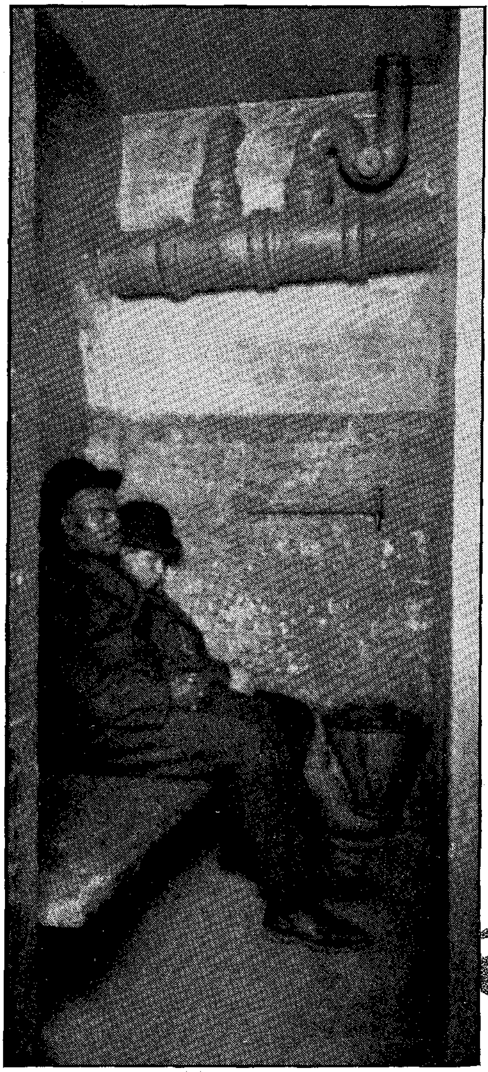
"Don't do it," they said anxiously. "Don't! You'll make the greatest mistake of your life. You've got your thieves there now all together under your hand. If you scatter them, where will you find them?"

It was a cry of alarm from the deepest convictions of the old police. They were destroying the old hunting-grounds of the detectives, tearing the heart out of the old traditions of the New York police force for handling crime. But underneath that honest protest, always distinct, was the sullen resistance of the Police System.

"Hands off our man-hunting grounds," said the police; "for the sake of the work of the department first — if not, hands off anyway."

The Aristocracy of Police Crooks

This immemorial Police System stood around them, listening, threatening, thwarting, and defeating them. What was the thing? they asked themselves, as thousands of other men have done. The average policeman is a good fellow, certainly as honest as the average man in his circumstances. And yet, there they were, surrounded at their headquarters and at their chief agencies by men of evil purpose. Why should the body of police continually put at their head the men who made the System? It was not long before they found the main clue. The average patrolman, as a matter of fact, had small chance to become an officer in the department. There was an inherited aristocracy of crookedness which rose, generation after generation, to take the higher offices of the force.

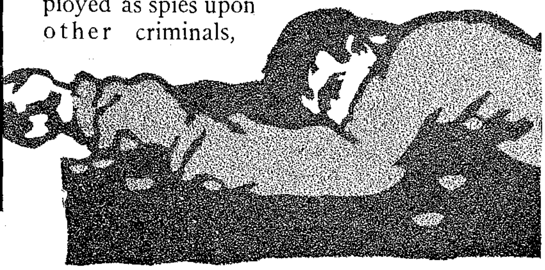


Photograph by Brown Brothers
BOY AND NEGRO IN A NEW YORK POLICE-STATION CELL

The significant fact they saw was this: three quarters of the police officers at the head of the department had started their careers on the force as plain-clothes men, operating at the centers of the under-world. They were sometimes members of the old detective bureau, but more often the plain-clothes agents of the notorious old-time officers of the police — the graduates of the man who gave the Tenderloin its name, of the chief who opened the town and threw away the key. These men had been chosen plain-clothes agents for obvious reasons: they were quick-witted, safe, and crooked; they alone had the political influence and the money needed to buy promotion in dishonest police administration; they alone had had that close observation and training, in the work of the higher grades, which placed them at the head of examinations for promotion in the administrations that were honest. The average patrolman had no chance for advancement in competition with these men of the "System."

The Code of the Police System

Over a long period of years this Police System has established its traditions, which it hands down from one generation to another. These traditions form a strange code of ethics. Thieves, according to this code, should be caught — if it is not too hard work — and not licensed to operate for money. Money may be taken from citizens who want their stolen goods recovered, but it is only the more crooked detectives who take the money of thieves. Yet "stool-pigeons" must be employed as spies upon other criminals,



and for this privilege they must have the right to operate in their minor specialties and get a living for themselves. Saloonkeepers and gamblers may be taxed for the privilege of breaking the law. They are a part of the "necessary evil" in a great city, as is prostitution.

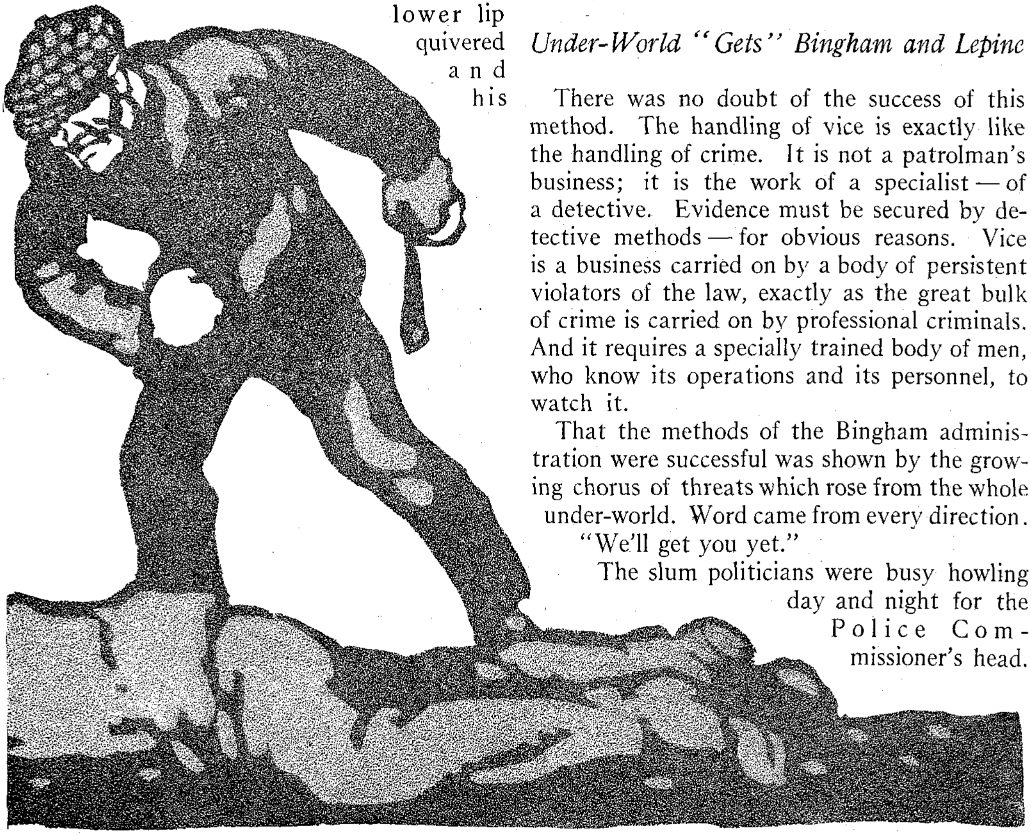
Concerning the tax upon prostitution the tradition of the System is a little different. This is "blood-money"—"dirty money." It is always taken, but some officers let the plain-clothes agents keep it. They give it up, not on moral grounds, but because there is a wide-spread superstition that this graft is unlucky. A number of men in the System (their names are familiar in the force) who took it have had a great deal of trouble in their families. But some one takes this money, always.

Gradually the management of the New York police began to sense the situation. And, as they watched, crime and vice and criminals kept boiling up from the same old stews on the East Side.

Smashing the Crime Center

General Bingham was an obstinate and headstrong man.

"By ged," said Bingham, slamming his fist down on his desk,— and his lower lip quivered and his pointed mustache stood out straight,— "we're going after 'em, and we're going after 'em all."



He started first to smash the district with the ordinary police force. Nothing happened, except explanations.

"No explanations!" said Bingham. "What I want is results. You're off that job."

Finally, instead of leaving vice to be handled by patrolmen, its suppression was delegated to specialists. This was not, indeed, a part of the theory of the Bingham administration, but it gradually became, in fact, its practice. The suppression of vicious resorts was first made the responsibility of the inspector in a particular district; but inspectors were moved along until one man was found who could be trusted to pound them. And afterward this man was moved from one district to another for the same purpose. He had become a specialist.

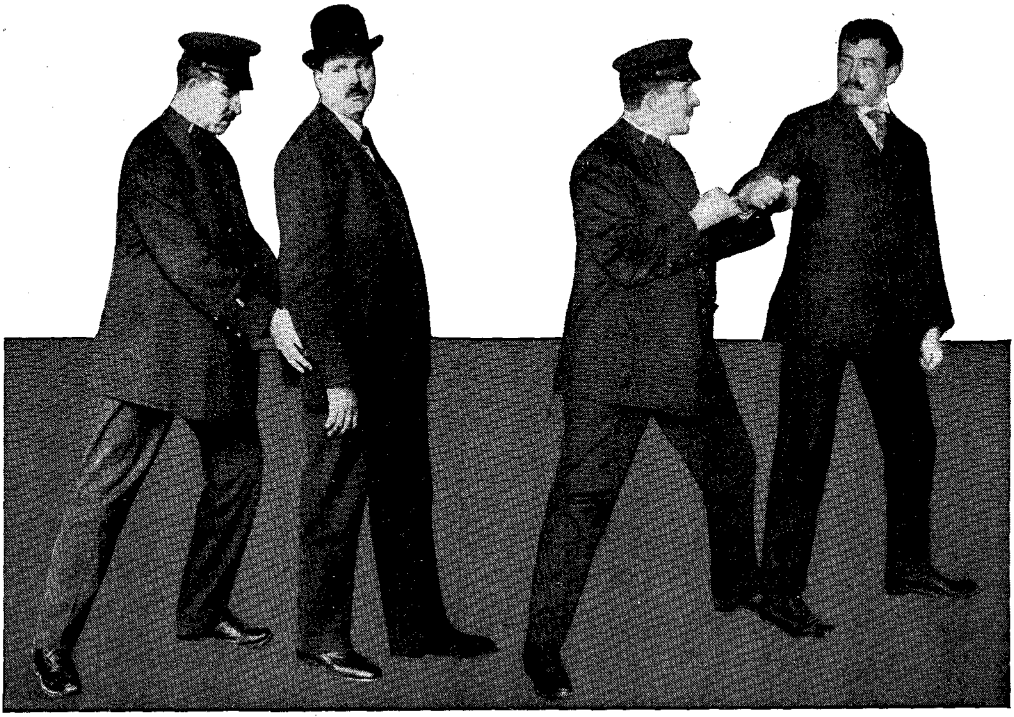
In addition, the ex-schoolmaster, Deputy Woods, with the aid of special squads, moved against the ancient dens around Chatham Square. Evidence was secured, new methods were devised for outwitting the sharp corps of lawyers under constant retainer by the various departments of the under-world, and the dives of Chatham Square, whose doors had never closed, day or night, for generations, were shut — and shut to stay.

Under-World "Gets" Bingham and Lepine

There was no doubt of the success of this method. The handling of vice is exactly like the handling of crime. It is not a patrolman's business; it is the work of a specialist — of a detective. Evidence must be secured by detective methods — for obvious reasons. Vice is a business carried on by a body of persistent violators of the law, exactly as the great bulk of crime is carried on by professional criminals. And it requires a specially trained body of men, who know its operations and its personnel, to watch it.

That the methods of the Bingham administration were successful was shown by the growing chorus of threats which rose from the whole under-world. Word came from every direction. "We'll get you yet."

The slum politicians were busy howling day and night for the Police Commissioner's head.



Photograph by Brown Brothers

IN THE NEW YORK POLICE SCHOOL FOR RECRUITS, WHERE HUNTING AND CAPTURING CRIMINALS
EFFECTIVE METHODS OF HANDLING CROOKS. THE ABOVE GROUPS ARE TAKEN FROM
CUFF A PRISONER, AND

And finally, through the minor incident of photographing a juvenile offender for the detectives' gallery, the crisis came, and the first modern administration of the New York police was forced to a sudden end. At bottom, the fact was that the great forces of the under-world, with their endless ramifications, were too strong to be resisted. They "got" the Bingham administration of the New York police in exactly the same way and for the same reasons that the under-world and their politicians in Paris are credited with having "got" Lepine, the world-famous chief of the Paris police, this last winter.

The Trained Mind and the Police

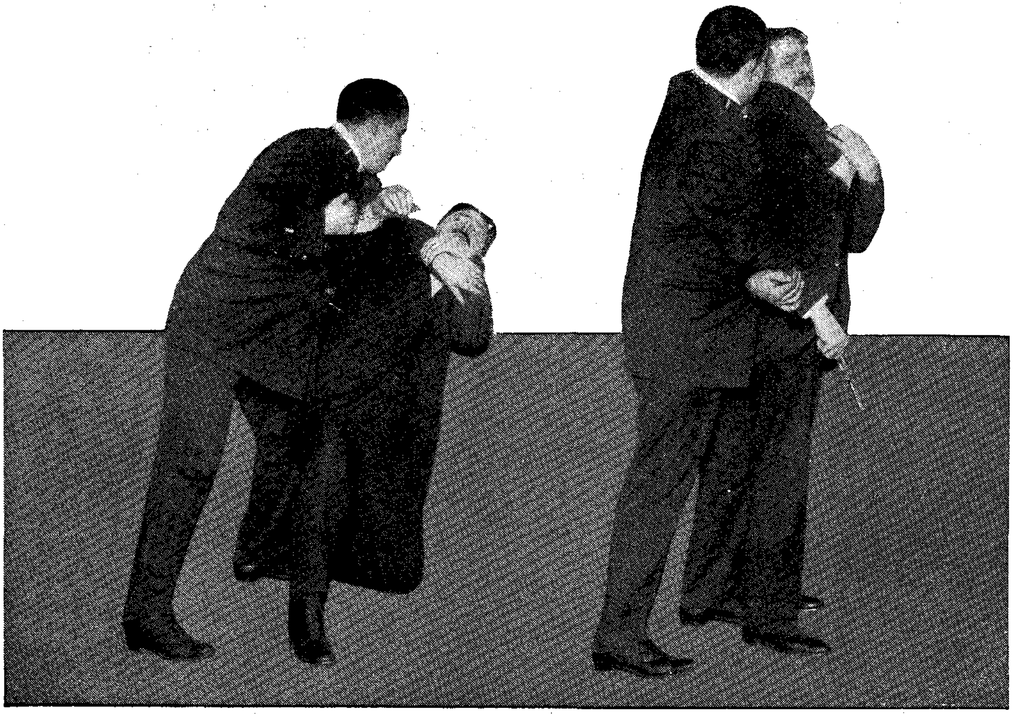
Now, the Bingham administration, composed of educated and intelligent men, had taken control of the police of the greatest city on the continent in blank ignorance of police work. Their ignorance, plus their intelligence, was the exact reason why they reformed it. They examined from the foundation up an organization built upon the traditions and customs of the great body of uneducated men who form police departments, and made it over into an entirely different thing. And they demonstrated thoroughly the fact that American police should be commanded, not by a man who has risen within its ranks, but by a man of an entirely different mental training, who will introduce into the structure the methods of administration common to all really modern institutions.

These pioneers in police work had followed out, in their development of new methods, the simple, logical processes of an orderly, trained mind. They had brought modern organization and system to the suppression of crime in the detective bureau, and, passing beyond this, they had applied exactly similar methods to dealing with vice.

But meanwhile they had reached the ultimate limits of police work under the old idea of it, and had touched a problem far deeper than the police could go. They had reached the system of the schools of the under-world, the source from which came up the constant stream of criminals which was discharged upon the city through the dens they were breaking up in Chatham Square and Second Avenue and Mott Street. To carry the campaign further, there must be recruited still another mental and moral force from outside the ranks of the police.

The Awful Nights and Sundays

The theorist and reformer knows very little of the unfailing sources of criminals; he lives in another and less populous world than the one from which they come. But every common pa-



IS TAUGHT AS A SCIENCE. OBJECT LESSONS ARE GIVEN IN PANTOMIME TO ILLUSTRATE THE MOST DEMONSTRATIONS IN HOW TO CONDUCT A SEARCH FOR WEAPONS, HOW TO HAND-HOW TO DISARM A MAN

trolman understands it — for he has seen it all his life. And for this very reason — strange as it may seem — the handling of the thing must be taken from the province of the patrolman and given to the reformer, who is now just beginning to see this huge social problem, the recruiting of the criminal classes — that old evil whose roots grow far down into the awful idle nights and Sundays in the three-room tenements.

When any intelligent person stops to think of this thing, it is clear enough. The young human animal shut up idly in three or four crowded rooms causes a situation intolerable both to himself and to the adults with him. He drifts naturally, often he is driven bodily by his parents, out to the city streets. And there he learns the old unwritten lessons of the night schools of the pavements of New York.

The ingenuity of the young boy pitted against the problem of making a city street a playground is one of the most extraordinary things in a great city. Founded upon the elements of familiar outdoor games, he has invented or adapted half a dozen ways of amusing himself. A tin can is a football, a flight of stone steps and the sidewalk a baseball field, a pointed chip and a broken broomstick a ball and bat. And most elaborate systems count the score. Nothing could be more clever or more pathetic than the efforts of the boy to overcome the limitations of the city street. But, in the end, the street defeats him. The limitations of space turn him unwillingly but certainly from active athletic sports to gambling.

The Dice Game of the Africans

Within the last fifteen or twenty years a new game, by its perfect adaptation to city conditions, has become the most popular pastime of the young boys of big cities. It is the dice game of craps — as old, probably, as the world, but here always the negro game — very possibly brought from Africa. At any rate, the negro gambler, coming up from the South with his "bones," has taught it to the whole country. It has become, in the last decade or two, a prepossession of the boys of the tenement districts in New York. Marbles and tops and baseball have their seasons — they demand more space than is accessible. But a pair of "bones" in a boy's pocket, a group on the corner of the sidewalk, and a gang of boys is embarked for hours of excitement in one of the oldest fascinations of the race. It is the game of all seasons and of any place. Surpassing all others, this African negroes' gambling game is now the almost universal pastime of the boy of great cities.

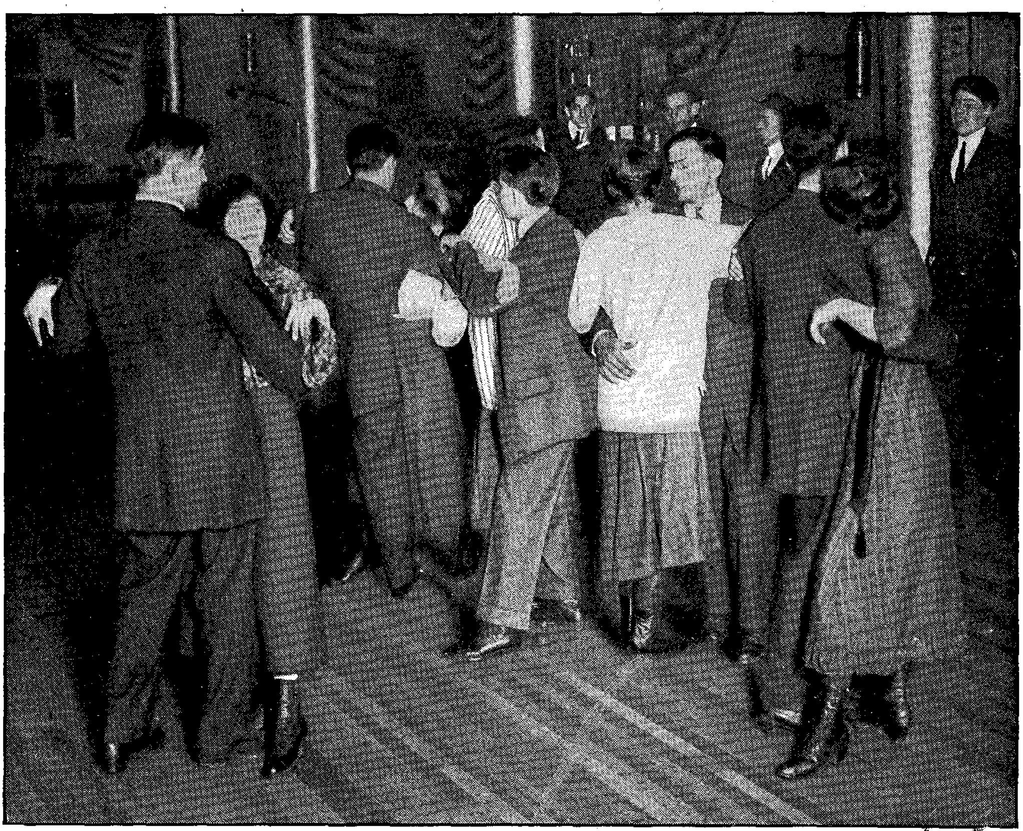
The extent and vitality of public gambling in the great city is a constant surprise to most men who were bred elsewhere. Generations of gamblers are educated, almost inevitably, on the sidewalks of New York and Chicago under existing conditions. And every generation of boys passes on the traditions to its juniors. Children of four or five are taught to "roll the bones" for their older brothers; by the time they are six or seven they know the somewhat complicated count, and in a year or two more they have made their own investment of a couple of cents, asked for the dice in the little newspaper shop around the corner, and are embarked in playing for their own pennies.

Now, the thief, as any city policeman will inform you, is almost invariably a gambler. This may seem odd, at first. But, if you know the city, you know that gambling and thieving almost necessarily go together. There is nothing more natural; for, from the dim edge of babyhood, the thief has stolen to gamble. There is a continual course in the education of crime in New York City, nicely adjusted upward from the first kindergarten lesson in craps to the electric chair.

This desperate juvenile game of craps is a fight to the finish; it usually ends only when all parties except one in the contest are cleaned out financially. And the natural result is a general foray of a good-sized group of boys for the purpose of replenishing their resources. The petty pilfering in a great city is constantly evident even to the most casual observer. Every now and then the passer-by sees children scurrying back into a side street with bundles of wood or coal; and everywhere throughout the boundaries of New York there is the scratching of the fingers of juvenile thieves. A great share

Photograph by Underwood & Underwood

CRAPS, THE AFRICAN NEGROES' GAMBLING GAME, IS THE UNIVERSAL PASTIME OF THE CITY BOY. IT IS A GAME OF DRIVING NECESSITIES, AND REQUIRES AN EVER-RENEWED SUPPLY OF CASH. TO MEET THIS FINANCIAL DRAIN, THE BOY OF THE STREETS HAS DEVELOPED AN ELABORATE SYSTEM OF PETTY THIEVING



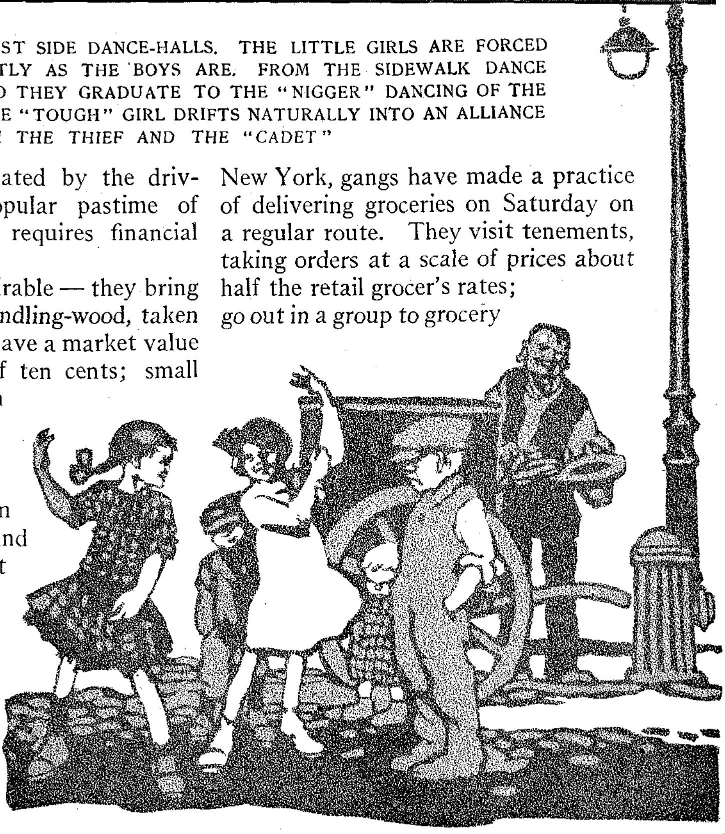
Photograph by Paul Thompson

IN ONE OF NEW YORK'S EAST SIDE DANCE-HALLS. THE LITTLE GIRLS ARE FORCED INTO THE STREETS EXACTLY AS THE BOYS ARE. FROM THE SIDEWALK DANCE AROUND THE STREET-PIANO THEY GRADUATE TO THE "NIGGER" DANCING OF THE EAST SIDE HALLS. HERE THE "TOUGH" GIRL DRIFTS NATURALLY INTO AN ALLIANCE WITH THE THIEF AND THE "CADET"

of their thieving is stimulated by the driving necessities of the popular pastime of the juvenile world which requires financial stakes.

Cement bags are very desirable — they bring two cents apiece; bags of kindling-wood, taken from demolished buildings, have a market value in the tenement districts of ten cents; small bags of coal grabbed from wharves are quoted at about the same price. This fuel, the ice from the docks in summer, and vegetables from hucksters' carts always find a ready and constant market among the poorer foreign tenement population — and no questions asked.

So sure is this source of income that boys sometimes conduct a regular little business delivering stolen coal and ice. On the extreme West Side of New York, gangs have made a practice of delivering groceries on Saturday on a regular route. They visit tenements, taking orders at a scale of prices about half the retail grocer's rates; go out in a group to grocery



stores and steal enough to fill these orders; take the cash from their customers; and spend the entire afternoon devoting the proceeds to a crap game, from which one boy emerges with the entire sum. So, as naturally as they breathe, generations of gamblers are bred in the great city; and, just as naturally, the child who is destined to be a thief is always sure to be a gambler.

A great proportion of the boys of a city could not, if they would, make their living as professional gamblers or thieves. At fourteen or fifteen they must go to work. And thus they leave the social and political organization of their localities to the Idle Boy — that great social force which dominates to such an extent the recreations and politics of the great city. The Idle Boy — whether he becomes a professional politician or a professional thief — continues his education through a common and well defined course of training.

The professional thief — and most thieves, like most prostitutes, are nearer twenty than thirty — continues his education in gambling and thieving simultaneously. His favorite "hang-out" is not the liquor saloon — according to the old-time popular belief; it is the cheap pool and billiard parlor, or, in rarer cases, a small cigar store with its rear gambling-room. The pool parlor, as every detective in the city knows, is the great grammar school of thieves and gamblers.

The Grammar Schools of Thieves

Pool itself is a promising field for gambling; the surface of the pool-table makes an excellent place for the game of craps, and soon the pool parlor has added special crap-tables and equipment for other gambling games. It is a little gambling center; and the older boys find that gambling in its higher courses is exactly as stimulating to thievery as is the kindergarten on the sidewalks.

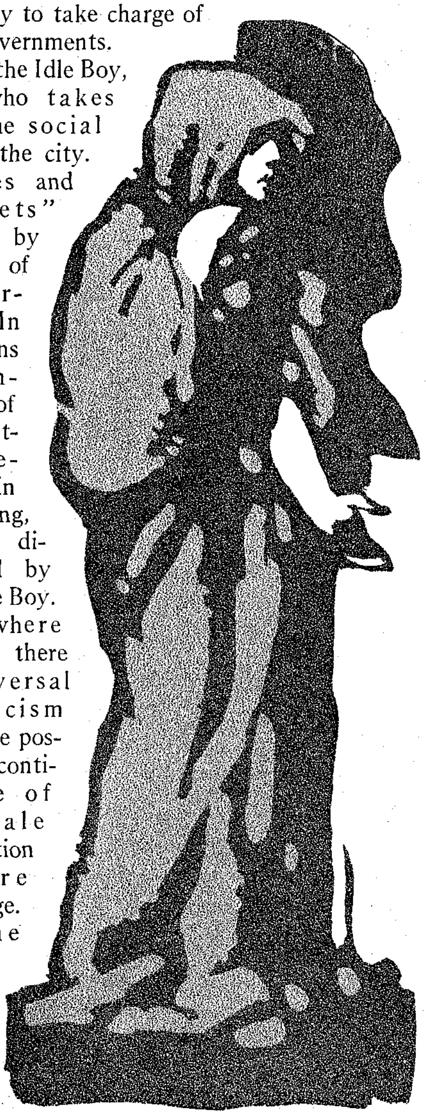
The Idle Boy, who loafs about these places while other boys of his age are working, must have money. Gambling demands it; he needs it to maintain the sartorial effects that are required by the traditions of his set. The pool parlor and little gambling place become the centers at which young thieves originate and pass on methods of crime. And in an exceedingly short time that curious product of new environment, the modern city thief, is sent out into practical life.

He is a soft-handed youth who carefully maintains a code of dressing of his own — a particular hair-cut, fine-striped suits, deep-cuffed trousers. In his way, he is as vain and scrupulous of his appearance as an eighteenth-century fop. As a matter of fact, he is a most important social figure, with widespread social and political responsibilities.

The Idle Boy, Ruler of Cities

Very few people realize how far the destinies of a great city are taken charge of by the Idle Boy. The one place where votes form naturally in bunches, ready to the hand of the professional politician, is in the gangs of youths just coming into manhood, into which a large part of New York and Chicago and other cities naturally divide themselves. And the apprentice politician who takes charge of them is, naturally, the Idle Boy, who is developing the physical and social traits of a leader. The more crooked the gang, the more votes it will cast; and, by natural sequence, the "wise boys" graduate successively to take charge of city governments.

It is the Idle Boy, also, who takes over the social life of the city. Dances and "rackets" are his by right of leadership. In the teens the instinct of sex-hunting develops in the gang, and is directed by the Idle Boy. Everywhere to-day there is universal skepticism over the possible continence of the male population before marriage. In the



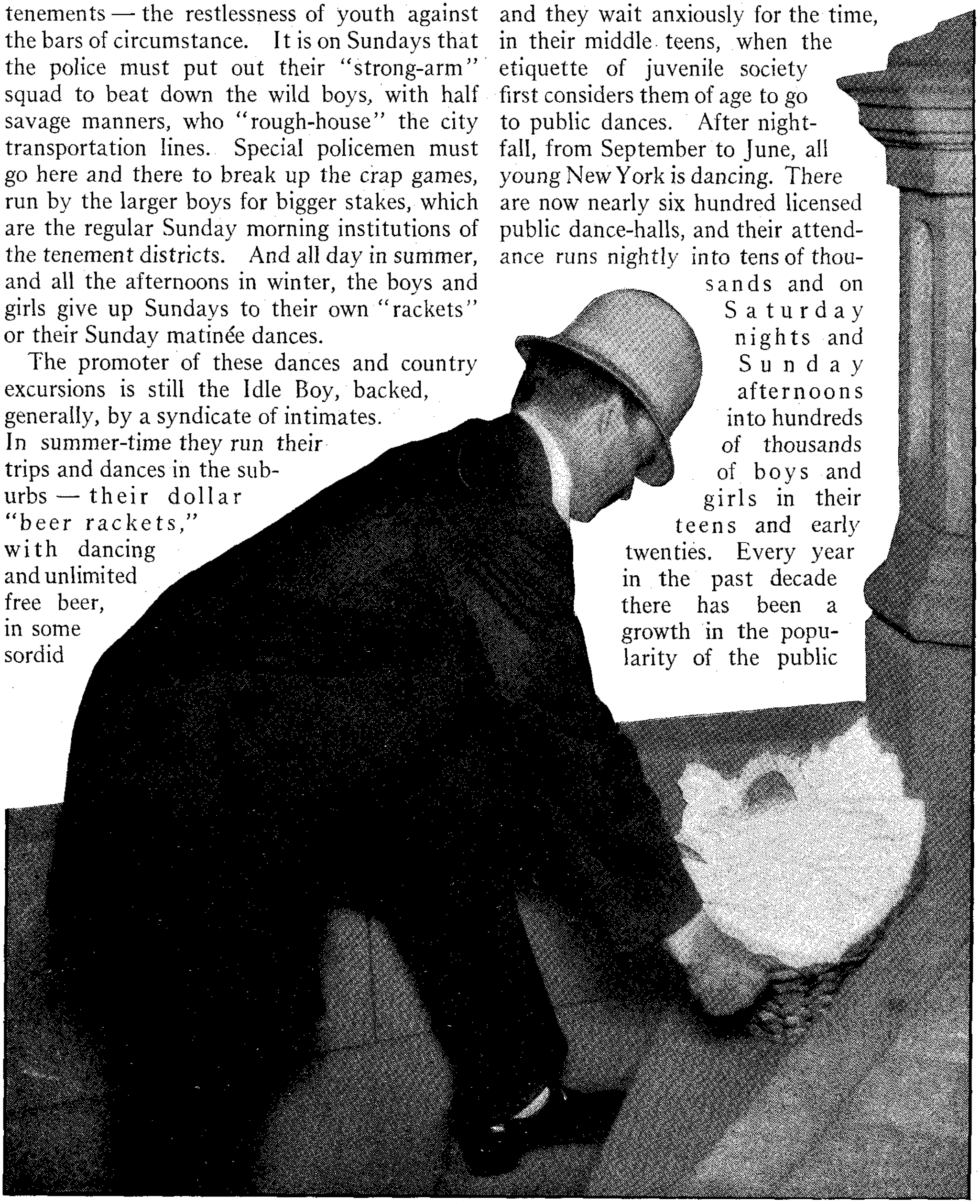
crowded city tenement districts there is small question that nearly all boys begin their sexual experience in their teens.

The little girls are forced into the streets exactly as the boys are; and, in the boys' minds, they come to be divided roughly into "good girls" and "bad girls." The "good girls," it is stated, are those that "their folks make come in by ten o'clock at night." They are the girls, in other words, whose parents take some care of them.

With the girls, as with the boys, the main trouble is the awful nights and Sundays in the tenements — the restlessness of youth against the bars of circumstance. It is on Sundays that the police must put out their "strong-arm" squad to beat down the wild boys, with half savage manners, who "rough-house" the city transportation lines. Special policemen must go here and there to break up the crap games, run by the larger boys for bigger stakes, which are the regular Sunday morning institutions of the tenement districts. And all day in summer, and all the afternoons in winter, the boys and girls give up Sundays to their own "rackets" or their Sunday matinée dances.

The promoter of these dances and country excursions is still the Idle Boy, backed, generally, by a syndicate of intimates. In summer-time they run their trips and dances in the suburbs — their dollar "beer rackets," with dancing and unlimited free beer, in some sordid "summer garden" or park, where a few dejected shrubs or a couple of papier-mâché palm trees work Sundays as a forest. In some cases, in Philadelphia and New York, suburban farms rent their grounds and buildings complete on Sundays to these picnic dancing parties. The Idle Boy is in charge of a great share of these entertainments, and he tends always to drag the institution down to his own level. The dance, to him, is a sex hunt.

The girls of the tenements dance early. The sidewalk dance around the street-piano is one of the commonest games of their childhood, and they wait anxiously for the time, in their middle teens, when the etiquette of juvenile society first considers them of age to go to public dances. After nightfall, from September to June, all young New York is dancing. There are now nearly six hundred licensed public dance-halls, and their attendance runs nightly into tens of thousands and on Saturday nights and Sunday afternoons into hundreds of thousands of boys and girls in their teens and early twenties. Every year in the past decade there has been a growth in the popularity of the public



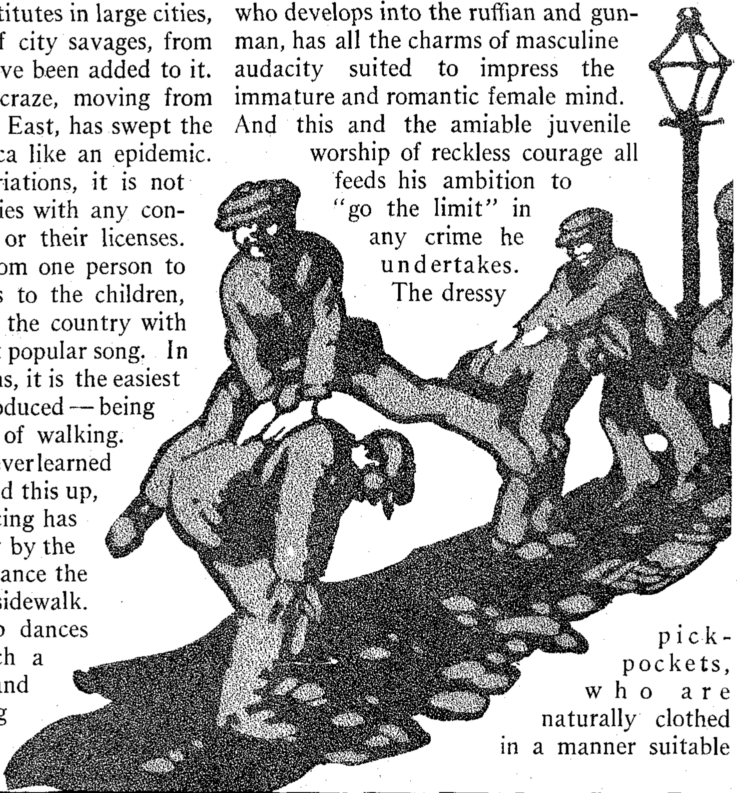
Photograph by Jessie Tarbox Beals

POLICEMAN PICKING UP A FOUNDLING FROM THE STEPS OF A PRIVATE RESIDENCE dance. In the last three or four years, since the arrival of the "nigger" dances and the "rags" and the "turkey trots," dancing has become a public obsession. Like the gambling game of craps,—which has supplanted or changed the habits of boyhood from the traditions of sport of northern Europe to the games of the negro,— this new dancing is a curious recrudescence, apparently originating from the same source as the gambling game. The "nigger" dance seems to find its main origin in the crude and heathen sexual customs of middle Africa, afterward passing through the centers of prostitutes in large cities, where the contributions of city savages, from Paris to San Francisco, have been added to it.

This "nigger"-dancing craze, moving from the South and West to the East, has swept the city populations of America like an epidemic. In most of its many variations, it is not taught by dancing academies with any concern for their reputations or their licenses. But its steps are passed from one person to another, from the youths to the children, until it has gone through the country with the thoroughness of a great popular song. In its simpler and grosser forms, it is the easiest kind of dancing ever introduced — being merely a modified form of walking. Thousands of people who never learned the older dances have picked this up, and the popularity of dancing has been widened tremendously by the fact. Even little children dance the grotesque steps upon the sidewalk.

The promoter of cheap dances has never before had such a public for his enterprises, and never before has dancing been such a provocation to immorality. The recent trend has been entirely toward the ideals of the Idle Boy. Around him centers the organization for sex-hunting of the boys who are seeking the "bad girls"; for strangers in the hall, he and his assistants are constant sources of information on the same subject. The natural instinct of the man to test and tempt the woman is solidified in the dance-hall into what is, for all practical purposes, a perfect system.

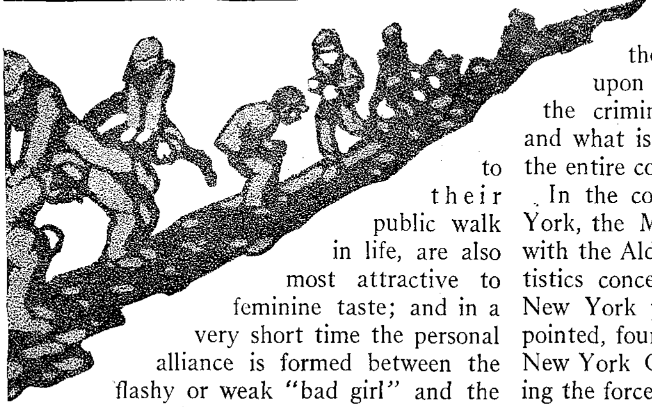
The Idle Boy is the hero as well as the leader of these affairs. The swashbuckler type, who develops into the ruffian and gunman, has all the charms of masculine audacity suited to impress the immature and romantic female mind. And this and the amiable juvenile worship of reckless courage all feeds his ambition to "go the limit" in any crime he undertakes. The dressy pickpockets, who are naturally clothed in a manner suitable



Photograph by Brown Brothers

"THE 'IDLE BOY' IS A GREAT SOCIAL FORCE, DOMINATING THE RECREATIONS AND POLITICS OF A GREAT CITY"

Photograph by Brown Brothers



to their public walk in life, are also most attractive to feminine taste; and in a very short time the personal alliance is formed between the flashy or weak "bad girl" and the Idle Boy, in the inevitable semi-marital relation of the criminal and the prostitute.

And so, by gradual and natural steps, the solidarity of the criminal world is built up. The gambler is a thief, the thief is a "cadet"; the prostitute part wife, part business partner, part slave of her man. And the vice promoters and the slum politicians and the crooked policemen are all a part of the same class.

It was the last focus of this criminal world — the place in the city where all the graduates of the schools found their gathering-places — that Bingham, as New York Police Commissioner, had attacked. And for doing this the under-world, in turn, had broken him.

What Is a Policeman?

And then, with the fall and disorganization of the Bingham police force, and the advent of a new city administration, all the under-world and its women ran wild, until it worked its own destruction, and brought down with it its old ally, the Police System, through the killing of the famous professional gambler, Rosenthal, by professional murderers in the hire of a New York police officer.

The attention of the city of New York, and of the nation, was centered by this event upon the police and their alliance with the criminal classes. What is a policeman, and what is his capability and proper sphere? the entire country asked itself.

In the course of the investigations in New York, the Municipal Research Bureau, acting with the Aldermanic Committee, took the statistics concerning the men who entered the New York police force in 1912. Of 421 appointed, four out of every five were born in New York City. The average age on entering the force was twenty-four years, and about two out of every three were unmarried. Only two of the 421 had an education reaching through a high school; the remainder had gone no further than the grammar grades. They were drawn from a great variety of occupations — more than a quarter of them from positions like those of drivers and motormen, concerned with the traffic of the public streets; and nearly all of the remainder were drawn from work of a grade somewhat above that of the common laborer. Only about ten per cent had been in clerical positions. About one third of these men had been arrested, nearly all for the minor offenses in which active city-bred youths of their class are most apt to be concerned — the commonest charge being that of disorderly conduct.

The police, in short, are drawn from the boys brought up on the streets of New York. They know the poorer population as no reformer can ever know it; for they are a part of it.

In the older police force, the patrolman was assigned, whenever possible, to the district he grew up in. And, to some extent, he is still. To the patrolman observing an offense, some one has said, the practical question far too often is: "Shall I take my friend's money or send him to jail?" In the home district he is,

Photographs by Jessie Tarbox Beals

"THE INGENUITY OF THE YOUNG BOY PITTED AGAINST THE PROBLEM OF MAKING A CITY STREET A PLAYGROUND IS ONE OF THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY THINGS IN A GREAT CITY"

naturally, everybody's friend. And, wherever he may be, the people in shady occupations are using every means, direct and indirect, to get upon a friendly footing with him.

Now, a class with the viewpoint and the associations of the patrolman could scarcely be expected, in any case, to originate methods of handling the great and delicate policies required for dealing with vice and crime in a great city. As a matter of fact, the police force has never originated any movement toward improvement in administering the law — especially in that greatest of all questions, the suppression of criminal immorality — of its own accord. This has always been the province of the outsider — of the reformer with the up-country ideals of human conduct.

Out of this source has arisen, in the last few years, another movement toward both a more rational and a more human treatment of crime and vice in great cities. From this, it may be hoped, will soon come the complete idea of a new police.

The present old-time idea of a police force is built upon the ideals and traditions of generations of constables and watchmen. At its best, it follows, through the rule-of-thumb processes of a class untrained in modern organization, the business of taking finished offenders, largely for committing crimes against property, and letting pass, as venial offenses, the "necessary evils" (according to its code of reasoning) of vice, and gambling, and the breaking of the liquor law.

The Police of the Future

An outline of the new police that American cities must have can be gathered from a consideration of the Bingham experiment in New York and the still broader reforms now being formulated and worked out in other large cities.

The new police will put the patrolman into the place for which he is eminently fitted — the position of general neighborhood watchman and guardian. He will be trained for this not too easy work in police schools.

Modern commercialized crime, with its specialists, criminal and legal, will be met by the specialization of the detective force, helped by the most modern systems of following crimes and identifying criminals.

Vice and excise offenses and gambling will be handled in much the same way. They are carried on by perfectly well known operators; they should be followed by specialists. It is definitely determined, in every mind that has any knowledge on the subject, that the under-world is a unit which can not, by its nature, be dissected into artificial parts. The only way to arrest the thief, without arresting the gambler or the "cadet," would be to split the individual offender in half, arbitrarily arrest the south side of him as a thief, and let the north side go as a gambler.

Then, still beyond the matter of mere administration of law, must come the more important function now generally proposed for the new police — the focusing of the best and soundest sentiment of the community upon the great question of public morals.

For a number of years past, private organizations like the Parkhurst Society and the Committee of Fourteen in New York have been working on the general problem of vice. In the past half dozen years this interest has quickened and extended. Local agencies in a great many of the cities of the country have been studying the question, and especially the relation of the unfortunate girl to it. One society, the American Vigilance Association, has become a general agency for conducting this work in widely separated cities.

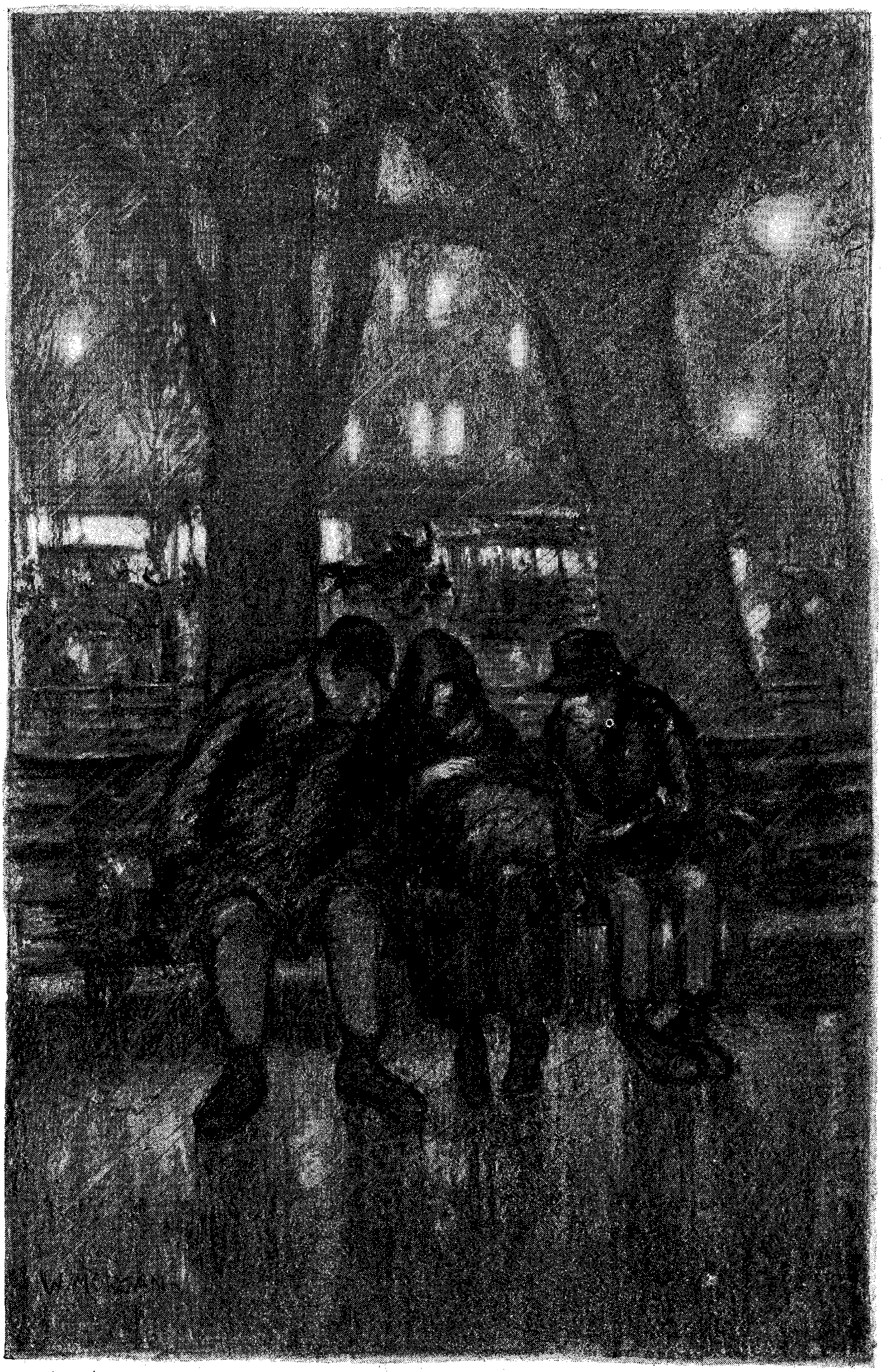
From these movements, quite naturally, has developed a general interest in the personal life and diversions of the population from which criminal and vicious classes are drawn. One notable and most healthy expression of this has been seen in the movement, which has extended across the country, to offset the present wave of indecent dancing by offering opportunities, within the means of the poorest, for dancing under decent and attractive conditions.

And now the latest proposal is to consolidate all the movements of this type, in different cities, into general morals or public welfare commissions, which would, on the one side, bring the best sentiment of the community to bear upon the enforcement of the law by the police, and, on the other, consolidate the movements for breaking up the schools for criminals and prostitutes, which have developed in all our cities, through establishing means for satisfying the normal tendencies and activities of childhood and youth, which are now let loose to run wild toward destruction.

The exact method of relating this new representation of public sentiment to the police is a somewhat debatable matter. The plan is being worked out somewhat differently in different cities — in New York and Pittsburgh and Chicago and San Francisco. But there seems no doubt now that public conscience in different cities will find a means, in these commissions, to express itself effectively upon this whole great subject of public morals in cities; and that this will go far toward effecting a radical change long needed in urban police.

That a new police with new ideals must come in our cities, and must come soon, no one can doubt. This is not merely a question of new methods of organization; it requires a great social reformation. And the outbreaks of strange and barbaric crime in all the great cities of the world — in London and Paris as well as in New York — show that it is one of the greatest and most pressing questions of modern city life, which can not much longer be ignored.

Photograph by Jessie Tarbox Beals



"'WHY DON'T YOU GO OVER TO THE POLICE STATION?' I DEMANDED. 'NOT TO-NIGHT!' SHE SAID SOFTLY. 'WOULD YOU HAVE MY BABY SPEND HIS FIRST CHRISTMAS EVE IN A JAIL?'"

THREE OF US

BY

JOHN FLEMING WILSON

AUTHOR OF "SPARKS," "THE NAZARENE," ETC.

ILLUSTRATION BY WALLACE MORGAN

IT was Christmas Eve in New York. The sullen east wind swept through Madison Square like a chill breath, drew a long, shrill cry from the leafless branches, and poured onward among the skyscrapers. Around me shone the varied lights of the city. Only a few blocks away, I knew, was a police station; and I was trying to keep up my nerve and not rush for its vile shelter.

The bench on which I sat — or crouched — was empty. No one had been wretched enough to join me. I alone, I thought, was without food or shelter on this stormy night — night of all the year. The police station called me. I knew what lay crowded within those gray walls; I set my teeth and sat still.

Gradually I became aware that another person was seeking refuge in the square. He appeared to be slowly coming toward me, though his course seemed devious. For the moment I hoped he was as wretched as I. Then I should not be alone any longer. My hope was justified. A rather burly fellow shuffled across the grass from the concrete walk and peered down at me.

"Asleep, pal?" he growled huskily.

"No," I responded, with a croak.

Without more ado he seated himself, careless of the streaming slats of the bench. "I'm as wet as I can get," he mumbled. "But I'm glad you weren't asleep."

"Why?" I demanded.

"It wouldn't ha' been safe for me to sit down here," he remarked quietly. "I've got too bad a name with the police. They wouldn't believe I didn't expect to rob you."

"Then you are a thief?" I asked idly.

"Yes," he answered, thrusting his white hands into the pockets of his miserable jacket. "What's your game?"

"I'm a newspaper reporter," was my response. "A stranger here, and broke."

My companion considered this for a while. Then he rumbled: "The third one will make the crowd."

"The third one?" I croaked. "Who is the third one?"

"She'll be along, I guess," he responded. "It's Christmas Eve, and lots of 'em don't hunt for the fifty-cent pieces *that* night."

"But why not?" I cried shrilly. "I should think they'd need the money most on holiday nights like this, when everybody else is happy."

"I dunno why not," he mumbled, and subsided into a sodden, silent heap.

The clock in the tower beyond us clanged ten. I drowsed.

I felt a sharp elbow in my side, and woke with a start. The man beside me was mumbling in my ear. I caught the words: "The third one is coming!"

I rubbed my eyes and stared toward the walk that led across the square. I saw a woman, shawled and evidently carrying something, who groped her way in the darkness and rain. I could not understand why she walked so steadily, yet vaguely, nor why she should cherish a shapeless bundle under her reeking wrap. I said to my companion: "She must be drunk."

"No-o-o," he replied, screwing up his eyes.

The woman heard our tones, and seemed to rouse herself. She stepped off the walk and crossed the grass to our bench with unhesitating feet.

Neither of us moved, but I looked up and said: "A fine night!"

I was amazed to hear her answer — an answer given quietly and tenderly: "It's the night He was born."

At the words, the other man moved over a little. "The place is drier and warmer there," he said gruffly. "Sit down."

She put one pallid hand on his knee and swung down into the place between us. I observed that she was hatless and that her clothes were of the cheapest. In the dim light I could not make out her features, but the voice was that of a young woman. However, a flaw of rain descended, and we were frozen into silence, huddling against one another for warmth until the squall passed.

"Why don't you go over to the police station?" I demanded, when we were able to speak.

"Not to-night!" she said softly. "Would you have my baby spend his first Christmas Eve in a jail?"

"Baby!" I ejaculated.

I perceived her slim arm compass the bundle under her shawl with a gentle, maternal movement. My companion leaned his white face down and seemed to listen. I heard his hoarse whisper: "Baby!"

"Yes," she said simply. "I'm just out of hospital."

I considered this. Then I said: "And his father?"

"He has none," was the gentle reply.

"Dead?"

For the first time I saw her thin, haggard face, lined with those indelible lines that are unmistakable. As she peered into my face she said a little sibilantly: "I worked in a dance-hall."

"There are the three of us, all right," chuckled the man on the other side. "Writer, thief, and prostitute!"

"Yes," she answered, leaning back again. "And the baby."

"It's a cruel shame!" I burst out. "What do you mean by bringing that innocent child out a night like this? Why didn't you stay in the hospital?"

"I was nearly well," she told us quietly, coughing between phrases. "And they took my baby away from me. I found him again, and then I came out into the rain."

"We must get enough money for the mother and kid to-night," put in the thief. "But I'm stung if I know how. *I* daren't show my mug on the street where a cop can see me. I dunno about you, pal, but I'd hate to trust myself, if I were you."

"Five policemen already have moved me on," I said bitterly.

"And I am blind," concluded the woman.

"Blind!" we both echoed.

"I've been blind a year," she whispered, bending over the child. "And the people in the hospital tried to deceive me about my child. They said he was dead. That was why I found him and ran away. They would have lied to me again if I'd stayed."

We were silent, the thief and I, for a long time.

The woman spoke again:

"You see, if I could only find my way around, I might get to some place where they'd take baby in. But I found this park by the sound of the wind in the trees. I don't know where I am. And a policeman would take my baby away from me."

"The girl's right," the thief remarked. "But I have a scheme: you tell us the address of some of your old pals, and we'll take you there. Maybe," he continued hopefully, "they might pass me pal and me a bite to eat and a shot of booze."

"I don't know anybody except some people in a mission on the Bowery," she responded. "Is that far?"

"More'n a mile," groaned the thief. "And we'd all get pinched before we got anywhere near it. That's no go."

Once more I suggested the station house.

"And have my baby taken away?" she said, on the defensive.

"Better for it, and for you, too," I said callously. "What do you want of the child? You can't take care of it."

She rocked over the silent bundle beneath her shawl. "Just for Christmas Eve," she protested. "You know, Christ's mother — she kept her baby in spite of even King Herod. It makes me feel better to have him — it makes me a better woman, more like Mary. I know I'm not fit to have him. But he came. And he's all the Christmas Eve I'll ever have!"

"Sure, you can keep the kid," the thief assured her. "Pal, let's see what we can do for this *lady*."

Chilled and wretched as I was, I caught the new tone of respect in the words. It stimulated me. Rather eagerly I demanded a suggestion.

They were ridiculous, the expedients we proposed. Each one had to be rejected on account of our peculiar relation to society. But the woman finally solved our perplexity by saying: "Maybe, if we walked on, we would meet some kind man or woman who would give us something. We needn't really beg. But if they once saw the baby, I'm sure they wouldn't refuse!"

Later she told us, "He is such a dear!" Her gentle hand wiped the wet off its palm before it entered the folds of the shawl. The bundle stirred. A feeble and muffled cry was heard by us two leaning men — leaning toward the mother as if to protect the solitary representative of the Madonna on that rainy Christmas Eve.

And then we proceeded down Fourth Avenue, making our way over the slippery pavements with halting, uneven steps. Several times we slipped to one side to allow a policeman to pass.

At last we came to Fourteenth Street, and there we hesitated in which direction to turn; but the outcast instinct of the thief was dominant. We went east toward the cheaper quarter of the city.

The thoroughfare was well lighted. On either hand we saw windows decorated with green wreaths or shimmering forth the tinsel glory of a gaudy tree. But no one was abroad, it seemed, and our feet lagged. Yet at last we heard brisk talk and light laughter coming toward us in the rain-shot dusk. The thief and I dropped behind. The woman lifted her burden a little higher in her arms, and faltered ahead, trying each step with a slipper-shod foot. Then she stopped, right in front of a quartet — two men and two women who seemed amused at the spectacle. I heard one of the women murmur: "Poor thing!"

Her escort fumbled in his pocket, laughed foolishly, and turned back to the other man: "Say, Fred, have you got a quarter for the woman here?"

"A beggar!" said the other, pushing up with the other woman on his arm.

The thief's voice crept into my ear: "Rich folks, pal! They'll dig if they see the kid!"

The blind mother must have thought the same, for with a proud gesture she gently lifted the shawl. I heard her soft voice say: "I'm asking for my baby!"

Both women seemed startled and bent forward. My companion put his long fingers on my arm, and we hardly breathed. But, instead of the exclamations of tenderness we expected, we saw the women stiffen and draw back. With hard, cruel eyes they stared at the blind woman, picked up their skirts, and proceeded, evidently flushed with anger.

When they were gone, the thief scowled blackly, twisting his avid glance after them. "If I only could, I'd make 'em pay dearly for that!" he muttered.

With some difficulty — in her darkness, the blind woman had not understood the sudden change in the manner of the people she had addressed — we persuaded her to move ahead. We once more fell behind.

On the next block a man and his wife, middle-aged and apparently fresh from some Christmas Eve party, stopped at the woman's first word. The old fellow dipped heavily into his pocket. The blind mother timidly offered her baby for inspection, with a low-voiced appeal we could not hear. The woman — and she looked good-natured enough — took one look there under the arc-lamp, and drew back. Her husband let out an oath and threatened the woman with his cane.

"Is God dead in New York?" the thief gritted out through chattering teeth. "Is there no mercy?"

We caught up with her just as a tall policeman, shining in oilskins, swung round the corner. The thief and I hurriedly gave the woman her direction, and dropped back by a house-stoop.

We had not informed her that she should pass beyond the policeman, and we cursed under our breath as she stopped and spoke, in the same soft voice, asking for alms. But the policeman nodded rather decently and asked a question. We caught the answer: "My child, sir."

"Child!" repeated the officer. "Haven't you any home or any place to go to?"

Something in his stern tone caught her quick ear. "Please don't turn me over to the police!" she said intensely. "I just want to keep my baby Christmas Eve, sir!"

With a slow movement of his caped arm the policeman drew up his flash-light. The beam traveled quickly across the woman's face; then it was snapped out. "I see," he said thoughtfully. "Well, I suppose you'd know where to go if I pay for the lodging? Honest, I ought to pull you in — but if it's the kid, well ——"

Did she feel the softening in his tone and hope the sight of the child would complete the victory? I don't know. She lifted the shawl once more. The flash-light gleamed steadily for a couple of seconds.

"You for jail," said the officer harshly.

The thief and I waited a moment, touching each other's shoulders with chilled hands. We heard the woman sob once. Then she recovered herself and pleaded with quick, tripping words. And at the last she broke out:

"Leave me just for to-night with my baby, sir! Just for this one night. I know I ain't fit for to be his mother. But it's Christmas Eve, and — and — and — Mary! save me!"

To our astonishment, this plangent appeal seemed only to irritate the officer. He grasped the woman by one arm and almost hurled her to the curb. She slipped, fell, and was motionless. The gutter water swished against her sodden form.

With one bound, the thief was stooping over her. With his white, rain-wrinkled hands he picked her up, and confronted the amazed policeman.

"Couldn't you see?" he panted. "She's blind!"

I joined the group, proud of my shameless associations. The officer scanned the thief with a sagacious glance, and then swung on me. "Huh!" he grunted. "So there's three of you!"

But the starved thief had reached the end of his physical powers. With a groan, he let the woman down. Her limbs refused to support her; but she clasped the bundle to her bosom with a frantic and tenacious spasm of maternal defense. And upon us gazed the majesty of the law, dubious, half enraged, half bewildered. But his indecision did not last long. The call-box was at his hand. He opened it and rang for an ambulance.

Five minutes passed, and we heard the plunging beat of horses' hoofs. We saw the glaring eye of the ambulance. It swung alongside the curb and a jacketed doctor sprang out.

He stooped above the woman a moment, and then called harshly for a lantern. The policeman drew his flash-light, and the thief and I peered over his broad shoulders as he stooped.

The blind woman's unseeing eyes stared steadily into the blinding glare. She smiled slightly. And as the doctor's quick hand drew the shawl away from the burden she bore, the thief and I gasped. Nestled against her full breast was a negro child.

The thief struck at the heart of the matter. "Look here," he said shrilly. "That woman is blind. I know she never knew — some one double-crossed her — *say!*"

The doctor looked up, bareheaded in the rain.

"Blind? Then I know who she is. The hospital has been trying to find a blind woman that stole a baby to-night at dark. The woman wouldn't believe 'em when they told her her own kid was dead, and when she stole this child they didn't miss it because its own mother was dead. Say, officer, take the baby, will you?"

It was the thief who received the waif; and he gently held it next his own dark breast while the doctor bent over the blind woman. Presently the policeman stooped over, too. There was a whispered interchange. The officer raised himself to his full height. "Well, you take the kid. I'll ring for the morgue wagon for *her*. What would you say she died of?" he queried.

The doctor bent down and pulled the thin shawl over her breast.

"Starvation — exposure — packing that kid around all night in her weakened condition. Blind, you said? I'll take the child. Good night!"

We slipped away, the thief and I. In the darkness of the next corner he laid his quivering fingers on my arm. In the distance we heard Grace Church chimes pealing the midnight hour.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN AMERICAN JEW

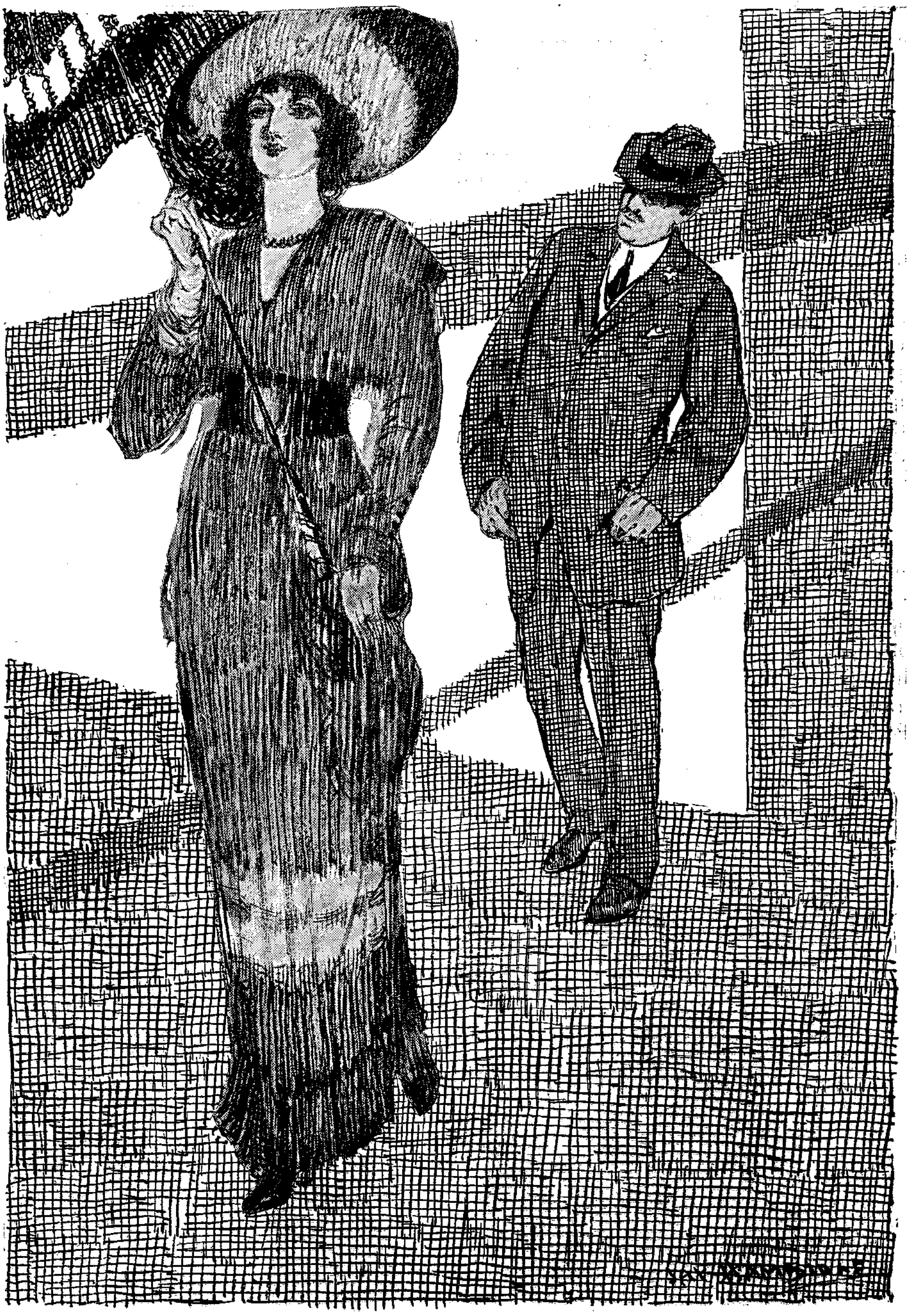
The Rise of David Levinsky

BY ABRAHAM CAHAN

Begun in April.—In the former instalments David Levinsky tells of his miserable childhood in the Russian Pale; his desperate efforts to obtain an education; and his strange love affair with a young Russian girl who supplies him with money to take passage to America. With twenty-nine cents in his pocket he lands in Battery Park and begins his struggle to gain a foothold in America. In two years he saves two hundred dollars, and with this capital starts a small cloak factory. After repeated discouragements he succeeds in getting an order for five hundred cloaks, buys his materials on credit, and works day and night to fill the order. But six days after the cloaks are shipped he learns that his customer has failed. A rich acquaintance rescues him from his desperate plight, and enables him to go on with his business. He rises rapidly and becomes a successful manufacturer on a large scale. One day he learns that the Russian girl with whom he was formerly in love is to speak before a New York meeting of Russian revolutionists. He tries to renew his acquaintance with her, but she repulses him. On one of his vacations in the Catskills he meets a Jewish stenographer to whom he makes advances. But in this affair, also, he is unlucky.

WHEN I got home and my business reasserted its multitudinous demands on my attention, the Catskill incident seemed to be fading into the character of a passing summer-resort romance. But I was mistaken: the pang it left in my heart persisted.

We were busy preparing for our removal to new quarters on Fifth Avenue near Twenty-third Street. That locality had already become the center of the cloak and suit trade, being built up with new sky-scrapers, full of up-to-date cloak factories, dress factories, and shirt-waist factories. The sight of the celebrated



"MANY A TIME, WHEN I SEE A WELL DRESSED AMERICAN WOMAN IN THE STREET, I FOLLOW HER FOR BLOCKS"

Avenue swarming with Jewish mechanics out for their lunch hour, or going home after a day's work, was already a daily spectacle.

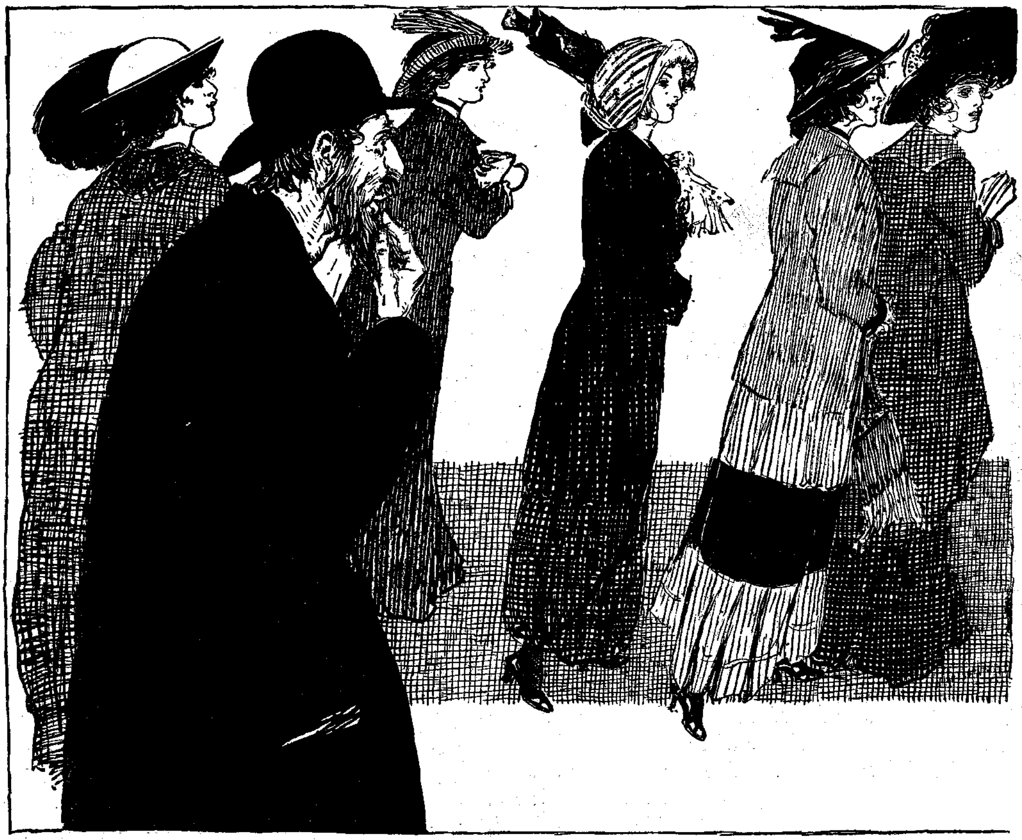
The new aspect of that section of the proud thoroughfare marked the advent of the Russian Jew as the head of one of the largest industries in the United States. Also, it meant that as the master of that industry he had made good; for, in his hands, it had increased a hundredfold, garments that had formerly reached only the few having been placed within the reach of the masses. Foreigners ourselves, and mostly unable to speak English, we had Americanized the system of providing clothes for the American woman of moderate or humble means. The ingenuity and unyielding tenacity of our managers, foremen, and operatives had introduced a thousand and one devices for making by machine garments that used to be considered possible only as the product of hand work. This — added to a vastly increased division of labor, the invention, at our instance, of all sorts of machinery for the manufacture of trimmings, and the enormous scale upon which production was carried on by us — had the effect of cheapening the better class of garments prodigiously. We had done away with prohibitive prices and greatly improved the popular taste. Indeed, the Russian Jew has made the average American girl a "tailor-made" girl.

When I learned the trade, a cloak made of the cheapest satinette cost eighteen dollars. To-day nobody would wear it. A woman can now buy a whole suit made of all-wool material and silk-lined for fifteen dollars.

What I have said of cloaks and suits applies also to skirts and dresses, the production of which is a branch of our trade. It was the Russian Jew who introduced the factory-made gown, constantly perfecting it and reducing the cost of its production. The ready-made silk dress which the American woman of small means now buys for a few dollars is of the very latest style, and as tasteful in its lines, color scheme, and trimming as a high-class designer can make it. Nor is it mere apish copying. We make it our business to know how the American woman wants to look, what sort of lines she would like her figure to have. Many a time, when I see a well dressed American woman in the street, I follow her for blocks, scanning the make-up of her cloak, jacket, or suit. I never weary of studying the trend of the American woman's taste. The subject has become a veritable *idée fixe* with me.

A Call from the Man Who Discovered My "Credit Face"

One of the men who came to congratulate me on my magnificent new place on Fifth Avenue was the kindly American commission merchant who had been the first to grant me credit when I was a struggling beginner. He was one of my closest friends now, and as I took him over my immense factory, splendid show-rooms and offices, we recalled the days when it took a man of unusual generosity to treat a beginning manufacturer of my type as he treated me. There had been a time when woolen mills would refuse to bother with the check of a Russian Jew; he had to bring cash. In the rôle of



manufacturer he was regarded as a joke. By hard work, perseverance, thrift, and ingenuity, however, we had completely changed all that. By the time I moved to the Avenue, our beginners could get any amount of credit. The American merchants dealing in raw material had gradually realized our energy, ability, and responsibility — realized that we are a good risk; while we, on our part, had assimilated the ways of the advanced American business man.

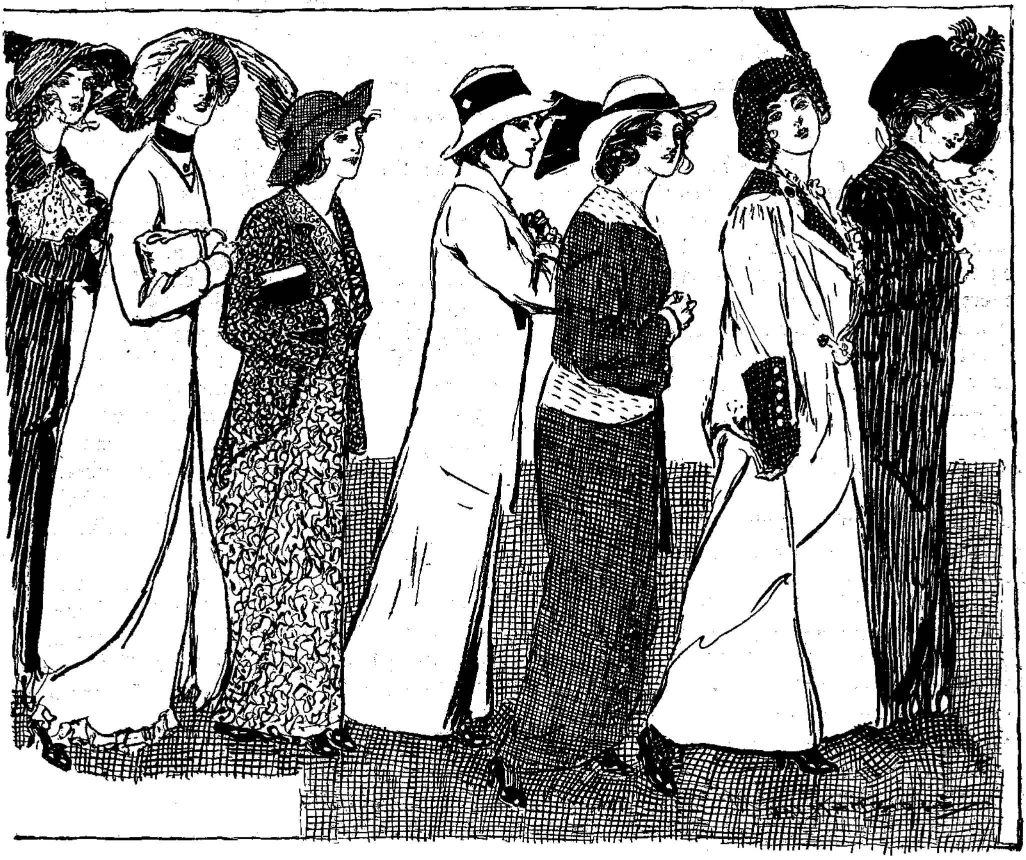
My new place was the talk of the trade. Friends came to look it over. There was dining and wining. I was naturally elated and happy, but there was a fly in the ointment of my happiness. The image of the stenographer I had met in the Catskills — her name was Anna Tevkin — came back to me again and again, marring my festive mood. My sense of triumph and self-congratulation often clashed with a peculiar feeling of self-pity and yearning. I sought relief in the thought that it was nothing more nor less than the sting of the rebuff I had received at her hands, and that all I wanted was a chance to disabuse her mind regarding myself. But, in reality, it was a case of love-sickness pure and simple. I recognized the sensation. Its flavor was familiar to me from the last days I had spent in my native town, when I was writhing with love for Sonya.

I Seek Out the Father of My Jewish Stenographer

Perez Tevkin, the father of the girl who had spurned my attentions, was well known on the East Side. I had a general idea that I might be able to make his acquaintance, and perhaps even insinuate myself into his friendship.

I set out to seek an opportunity for coming into contact with him. Incidentally, the venture side-tracked me into real-estate speculations which brought me to the verge of a financial collapse; but I came to my senses before it was too late.

Tevkin's business card described him as a "general business agent," which meant that he earned his income by acting as broker for people who wanted to sell or buy soda-and-cigarette stands, news-stands, grocery stores, delicatessen stores, butcher shops, cigar stores, book stores, and what-not, from a peddler's push-cart to a "parcel" of real estate or an interest in a small factory. Scores, if not hundreds, of stores and stands change hands in the



Ghetto every day, the purchaser being usually a former workman who has saved up some money with an eye to business.

Tevkin was an active man in his field, but it was not this that made him one of the noted characters of the East Side. When he had first come to this country, some fourteen years before, he had been preceded by his Russian reputation as a publicist writing in the holy tongue. There is a living modern literature in the language of Israel's dead past, having monthly magazines, weeklies, and even dailies; and to the readers of these publications Tevkin was a popular name. In New York he became conspicuous in Zionist circles. Writing Hebrew essays, however, proved a precarious means of livelihood in a practical country where the dailies and weeklies of the Ghetto that can afford to pay are all published, not in the language of Isaiah and Job, but in Yiddish, the German dialect spoken by the Jewish masses of to-day. Tevkin tried his hand at Yiddish journalism; but, somehow, the articles he wrote in his living mother-tongue lacked the spirit and the charm that distinguished his style when he used the language of the prophets. Then he drifted into the occupation of commercial go-between. As a rule, men of his type make poor business men; but there are exceptions, and he was one of them. This, however, did not prevent him from remaining a passionate Zionist and the ruling spirit of a large circle of dreamers. His office was one of the gathering-places of his followers, of Hebrew scholars, and of literary men of every description. Another favorite haunt of these people was a near-by café, and it was there that I laid my plans to meet him. Before visiting the place, however, I made it my business to peruse one of his two volumes of essays.

Conversations at that café were mostly carried on aloud, and an utter stranger could join in without being considered an intruder. Acquaintances were scraped in a most unconventional manner.

He Lures Me into Real-Estate Speculation

I had not finished my first glass of Russian tea at the place before the stenographer's father and I locked horns on a point which gave me a chance to parade my familiarity with his essays. This flattered the old man's vanity inordinately, as I could see from the glitter in his kindly eyes and from the change in his manner toward me.

The next time I went to the café, I found an employee of mine there, a young man with literary ambitions. From him Tevkin learned of my financial status. The consequence was that he took me around to his office, and, speaking with the same fervor with which he had a little while before enlarged on Bialik, the Hebrew poet, he offered to sell me some city lots in Brooklyn. The real-estate boom was just then beginning to intoxicate the five Ghettos of Greater New York. Small tradesmen of the slums, and even workingmen, were investing their savings in houses or lots. Jewish carpenters, painters, and brick-layers became builders of tenements or frame dwellings, real-estate speculators. Deals were being closed, and poor men were making thousands of dollars in less time than it took them to drink the glass of tea or the plate of cold *shchaav* (sorrel soup) over which the transaction took place. Women, too, were ardently dabbling in real estate, and one of these was Mrs. Chaikin, the wife of my talented designer.

Once, as I sat in a Brooklyn street-car, I was accosted by a bewigged woman who occupied the next seat and whom I had never seen before.

"You speak Yiddish, don't you?" she began, after scrutinizing me quite unceremoniously.

"I do. Why?"

"I just wanted to know."

"Is that all?"

"Well, it is all, and it isn't all," she said, with a shrewd, good-natured smile. "Since we are talking, I might as well ask you if you would not care to take a look at a couple of new houses in East New York."

I did not interrupt her, and she proceeded to describe the houses and the bargain they represented.

When she finally paused for my answer, and I perpetrated a labored witticism about her "peddling real estate in street-cars," she returned quite gravely:

"Why not? Is there anything to be ashamed of, or to hide? Did I steal those houses? I can assure you I paid good money for them. So why should I be afraid to speak about them? And when I say it is a bargain, I mean it. That, too, I can say aloud and to everybody in the world, because it is the truth, the holy truth. May I not live to see my children again if it is not. There!"

With which she took up some new details tending to show that by buying her two frame buildings and selling them again I was sure to clear a profit of ten thousand dollars.

Tevkin was not the first broker to offer me a "good thing" in real estate. Attempts in that direction had been made before, but I had warded them all off. Instinct told me not to let my attention be diverted from regular business to what struck me as a gamble. In the present instance, however, I had not the heart to say no. I was rapidly warming to the old man; for, besides being full of personal magnetism, there was the fact that he was the stenographer's father, and this gave him a peculiar glamour in my eyes, something akin to the fascination of kinship. But the great point was that his offer promised to bring me into closer relations with him — a prospect in the light of which the risk involved in buying the lots seemed a trifling matter. Besides, the "parcel" seemed to be a sure investment. So, a day or two later, I signed a contract for a deed. Well, my hope was soon realized. Full of enthusiasm over some far-reaching projects in which I was apparently the central figure, Tevkin one day invited me to his house. The scene took place in a Grand Street restaurant, a well known resort of East Side real-estate men.

I blushed and, feeling like a foolish little boy, said:

"I don't think your daughter would like it."

"My daughter?" he asked, in astonishment.

"Yes. I had the pleasure of meeting her in the mountains, and — well, I am afraid I was somewhat of *persona non grata* with her," I said, in a partial attempt to make a joke of it.

He dropped his glance, leveled it at me once more, and dropped it again.

"Why, what was the matter? What was the matter?" he inquired, in great embarrassment.

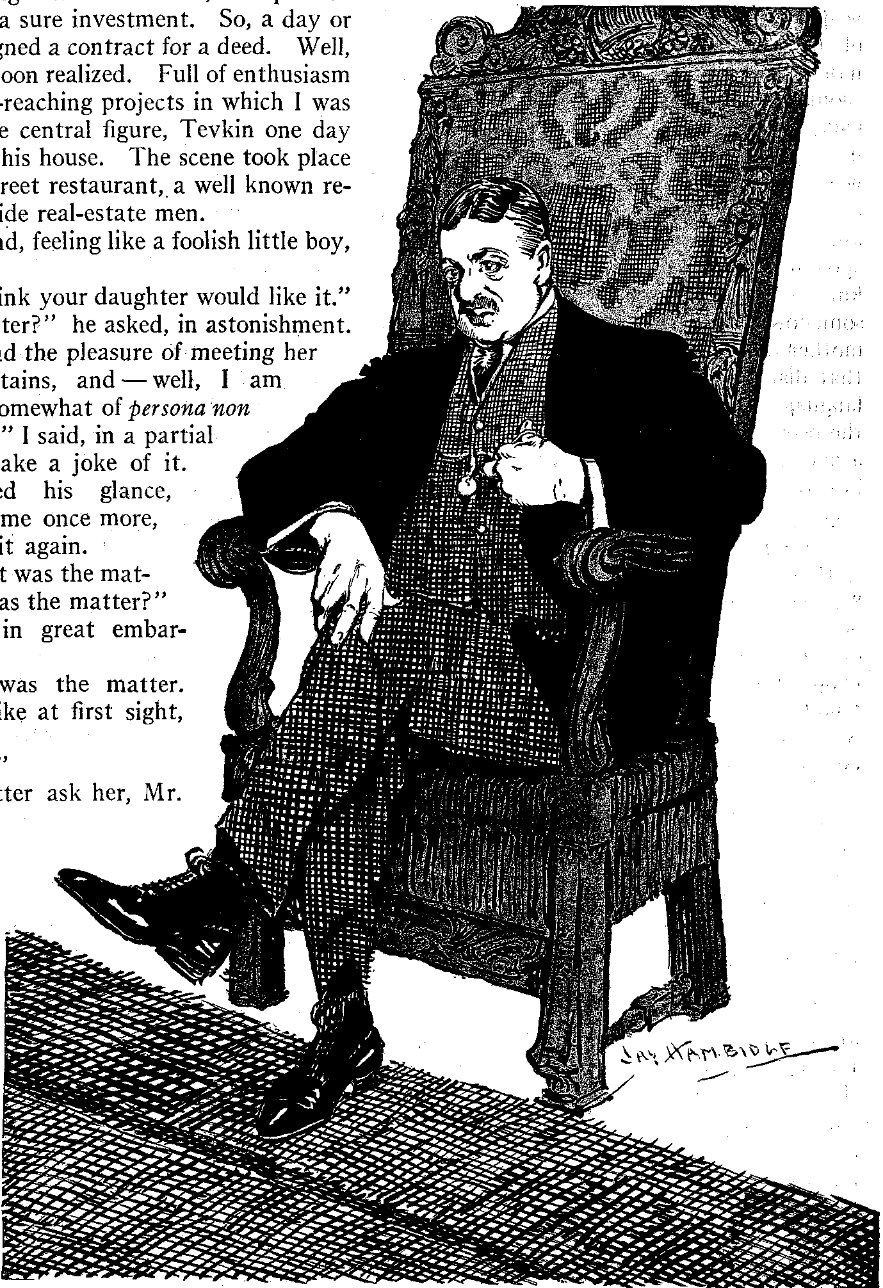
"Nothing was the matter. A case of dislike at first sight, I suppose."

"Still —— "

"You'd better ask her, Mr. Tevkin."

He made no reply. Nor did he repeat his invitation. He was manifestly on pins and needles to get away, without having the courage to do so.

The next morning my mail included a letter from him. It was penned in marvelous Hebrew, and read like a chapter of the Old Testament. He pointed out, with exquisite tact, that it was merely as a would-be courtier that I had failed to find favor in his daughter's eyes — something that is purely a matter of taste and chance. He then went on to intimate that, if the unfortunate little situation rendered it at all inconvenient for me to visit his house, he did not see why



"I AM LONELY. SOMETIMES I SAY TO MYSELF: 'THERE ARE CASES WHEN SUCCESS IS A TRAGEDY'" he and I could not continue our business relations. Whereupon he went into ecstasies over a prospective real-estate company of which he wanted me to be a leading share-holder. Companies or "combines" of this sort were then being formed on the East Side by the score, and some of them were said already to be reaping fabulous profits.

My Hebrew, which had never been perfect (for the Talmud is chiefly in Chaldaic), was by now quite out of gear. So my answer was framed in English interspersed with Yiddish. I said, in substance, that I was going to be as frank as he was, that I did not propose to invest more money in real estate, and that I asked to be allowed to call on his daughter.

"I have made a misleading impression on her," I pleaded. "I have done myself a great injustice, and I beg for a chance to repair the damage. In business I am said to know how to show my goods to their best advantage. Unfortunately, this instinct seems often to desert me in private life. Then I am apt to put my least attractive wares in the show window, to expose some unlovable trait of my character, while whatever good there may be in me eludes the eye of a superficial acquaintance.

"Please assure your daughter that it is not to force my attentions upon her that I am asking for an interview. All I want is to try to convince her that her image of me is, spiritually speaking, not a good likeness."

My letter produced a good impression on her. She had not thought me capable of writing such an epistle. It was an agreeable surprise to her, and my plea touched her.

The long and short of it was that I became a frequent visitor at her father's house. I never hinted at my passion, and she tacitly encouraged my visits on these terms.

The Tevkins were a numerous family, and each of its members worshiped at the shrine of some "ism." The stenographer, Anna, was a devotee of Zangwill's brand of "Territorialism" rather than of the full-fledged Zionism which her father preached. One of the forms in which her affection for the old man often showed itself was to twit him on his free thought.

"You need not take it all literally," she once said to me, after Tevkin had delivered himself of an atheistic jest. "At the bottom of his heart he is far more religious than he would have one believe." At this she nestled up to him and clasped him to her in a manner that sent a choking sensation into my throat and filled me with an impulse to embrace them both.

Tevkin never again approached me with his real-estate schemes, but the very air of his house these days was full of such schemes. Casting all his other business to the winds, he now devoted himself exclusively to people who traded in houses or lots. I met other real-estate men at his home. Their talk was extremely tempting. Huge fortunes seemed to be growing like mushrooms all over the Ghetto. But I tried to treat it all like something that was going on in another country.

At last I succumbed.

It is never a rare incident among our people for a man with a nebulous fortune of a few hundred dollars to plunge into a commercial undertaking involving many thousands; but during the real-estate boom this was an every-day affair. One of the men I met at Tevkin's, a former peddler of goods sold on the "instalment plan," had shortly before built an enormous block of high brick apartment-houses in Harlem with only five thousand dollars of his own; and before they were half completed he had sold them all, pocketing a huge profit. This man succeeded in luring me into a network of real-estate speculations.

I Make a Proposal of Marriage

Meanwhile, Anna and I seemed to be great friends, so much so that I was priming myself for a formal proposal. I made it one evening in April. It was the first Passover night, when Israel's liberation from the bondage of Egypt is commemorated by a feast and a family reunion, which form the greatest event in the domestic life of our people. In presiding over the beautiful ceremony, Tevkin tried to put a Zionistic construction upon it, as if he were celebrating the liberation not in a religious sense but merely as a nationalistic holiday.

"This is our Fourth of July," he shouted enthusiastically, as he drank the first of the four goblets of wine which are an essential part of the ceremony.

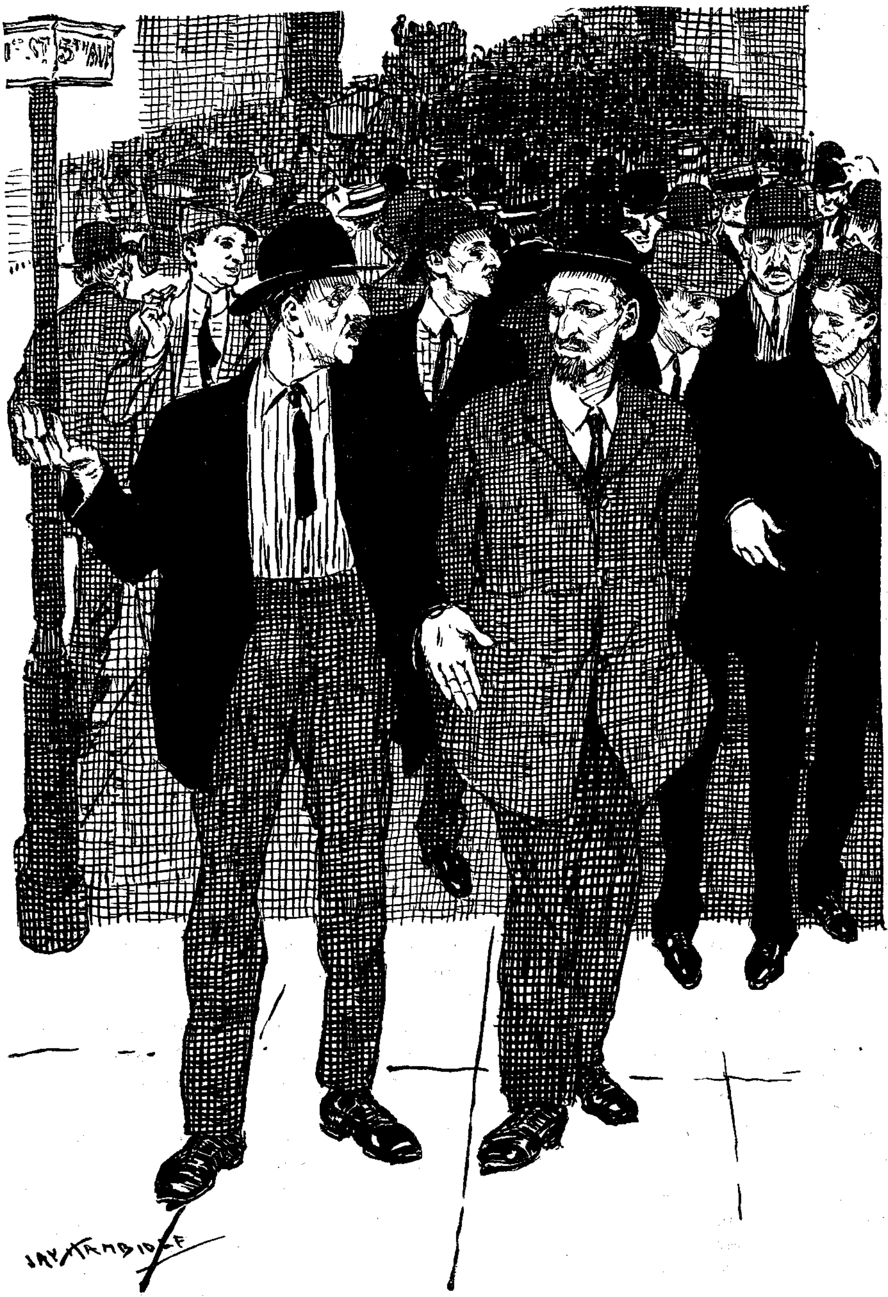
Anna gave me a merry wink. I felt myself almost one of the family. I was in the seventh heaven.

When the feast was over, I took her into a corner and said, simply:

"Don't refuse me. Marry me. Make me happy. I am awfully in love with you."

She was taken aback, and shook her head with confused ruefulness.

"I need not tell you that I have long since changed my mind about you. You are no more repellent, of course," she said, with a smile. "Far from it. I like you very much. But that is not love. Love is quite another thing. I am very sorry indeed."



"FIFTH AVENUE NEAR TWENTY-THIRD STREET SWARMED WITH JEWISH MECHANICS OUT FOR THEIR LUNCH HOUR. THIS WAS THE LOCALITY I HAD CHOSEN FOR MY NEW QUARTERS"

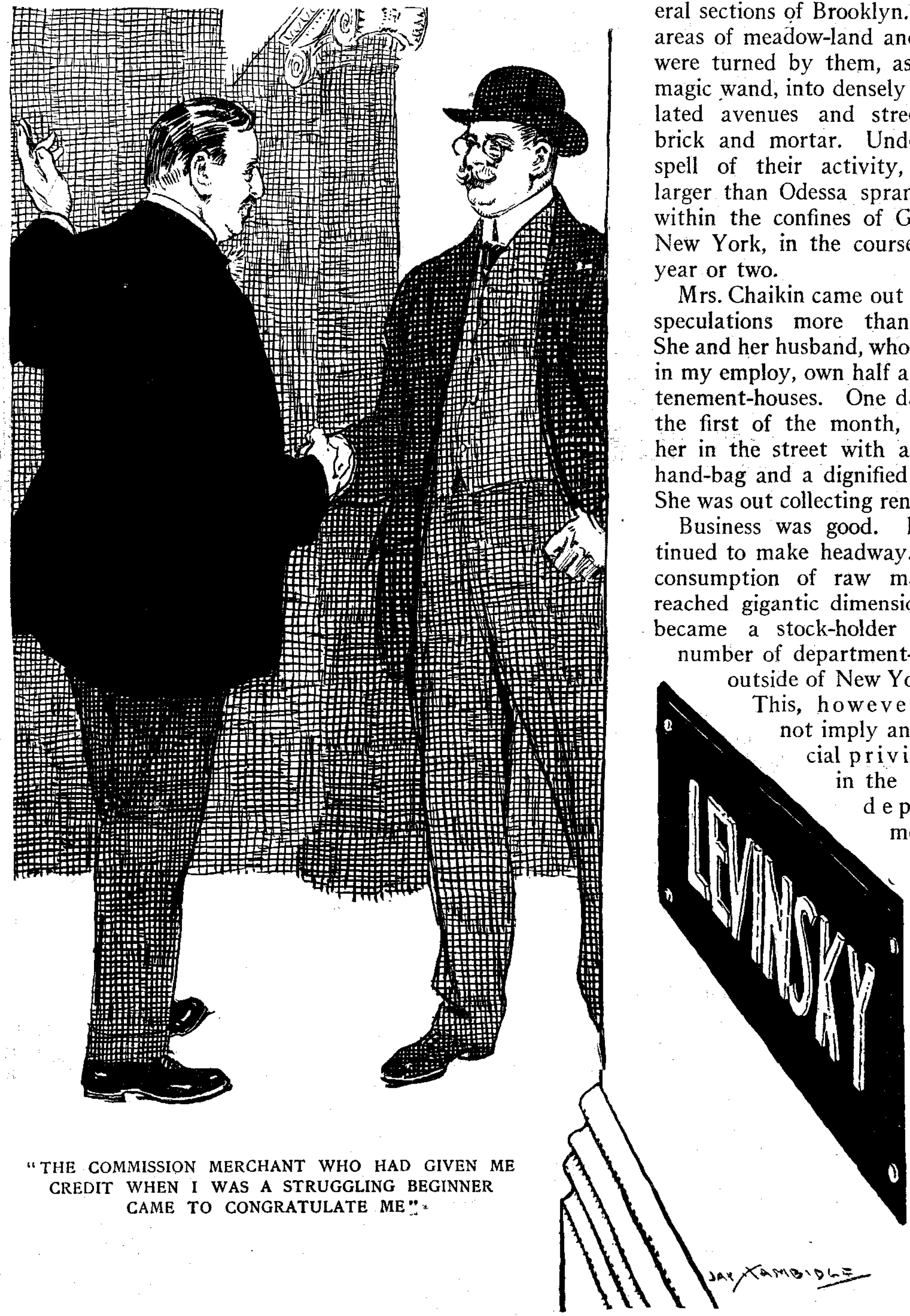
It was a severe blow. It caused me indescribable suffering. But ultimately I pulled myself together again. Then it was that I discovered the real condition of my affairs. I had gone into those speculations far deeper than I could afford. There were indications that made me seriously uneasy. Ruin seemed to stare me in the face. But I was lucky enough to get out of danger, and I devoted myself to the cloak business with fresh energy.

As to the former instalment peddler, who was my partner in several real-estate ventures, he lost a great deal of money, but made more. Finally, when he was rated at over half a million, the collapse of the boom came, and he was left penniless; but the speculating spirit was unbroken in him.

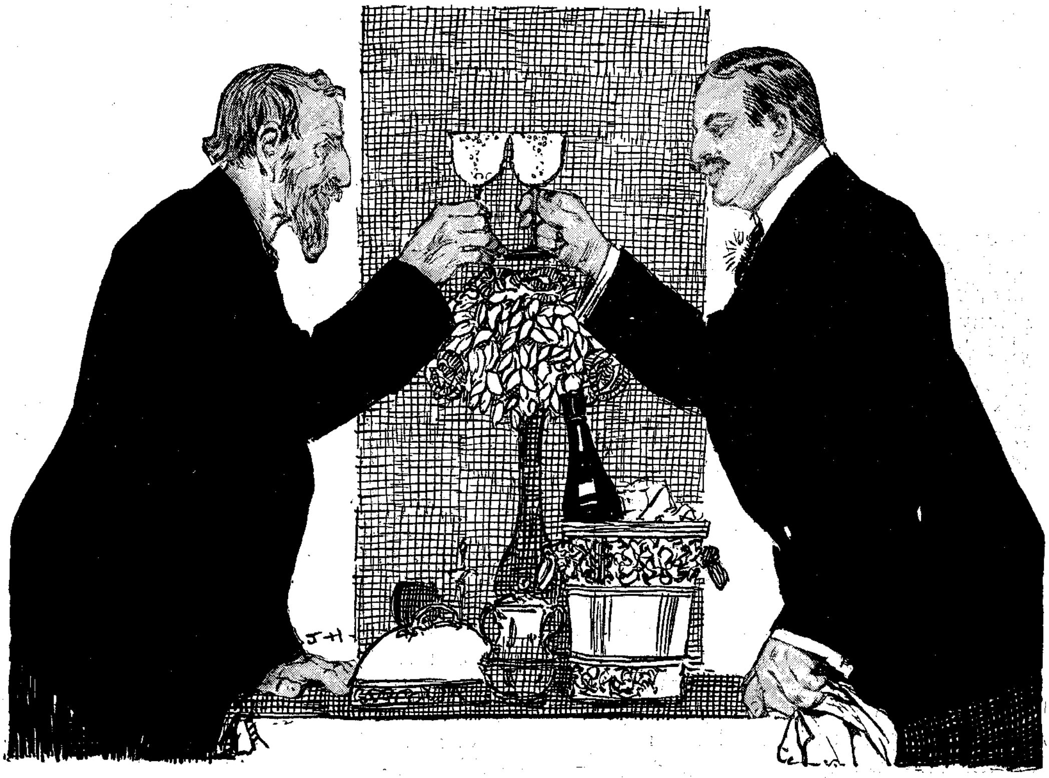
"It requires no money, but brains and a little bit of luck," he once said to me, with great gusto, as he paused to point at a block of high-class apartment-houses which he had built in the palmy days of his career. He was scheming some sort of syndicate again. He found himself in his element in the American atmosphere of breathless enterprise and breakneck speed. Men like him, with hosts of carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers,— all Russian or Galician Jews,— were rapidly building up the Bronx, Washington Heights, and several sections of Brooklyn. Vast areas of meadow-land and rock were turned by them, as by a magic wand, into densely populated avenues and streets of brick and mortar. Under the spell of their activity, cities larger than Odessa sprang up, within the confines of Greater New York, in the course of a year or two.

Mrs. Chaikin came out of her speculations more than safe. She and her husband, who is still in my employ, own half a dozen tenement-houses. One day, on the first of the month, I met her in the street with a large hand-bag and a dignified mien. She was out collecting rent.

Business was good. I continued to make headway. My consumption of raw material reached gigantic dimensions. I became a stock-holder in a number of department-stores outside of New York. This, however, did not imply any special privileges in the cloak departments of those



"THE COMMISSION MERCHANT WHO HAD GIVEN ME CREDIT WHEN I WAS A STRUGGLING BEGINNER CAME TO CONGRATULATE ME"



"I INVITED MY OLD "SHIP-BROTHER" TO HAVE DINNER AT ONE OF THE BEST HOTELS IN THE CITY. I ORDERED CHAMPAGNE"

stores. They had to be left absolutely free to buy in the open market. I bought those shares simply because it was a good investment. Certain merchants of Russian birth are getting to be quite an important factor in this kind of investment, but, of course, the big men in the department-store field are Hebrews of German-American origin or American Gentiles. As to Wall Street, where German Jews are a conspicuous element, our people are quite slow in setting foot there. We have not a single member in the Stock Exchange.

Women's Clothing a Fickle Commodity

Nor have our manufacturers of men's clothing achieved the same preëminence that we enjoy in women's garments. The industry that produces men's suits and overcoats is still controlled by American descendants of German-Jewish immigrants, although it contains hundreds of Russian Jews, and many of them are quite successful. The giants of the business are German-American Jews, while the vast army of workmen is made up of Russian and Galician Jews, with a growing minority of Italians.

Why have we not dislodged our German co-religionists in this line, as we have done in the case of cloaks? An answer to this question is to be found in the difference of character between the two industries, as well as between the men who control them. Cloaks are an extremely fickle commodity. Their market is entirely dependent on the caprices of ever-changing fashion. Accordingly, the business requires the watchful eye and the enterprising interest of one who is not merely a business man, but also a specialist in the mechanical part of the trade. Such men it has found among the Russian Jews. Indeed, most of our cloak manufacturers are women's tailors themselves. The German cloak manufacturers, on the other hand, were merely merchants. They had to rely largely on their employees, who were Russians, and who gradually supplanted them. The case is altogether different with men's clothing, where styles change comparatively little, so that one does not have to be a tailor himself in order to succeed as a manufacturer. Besides, as the man's coat of to-day will sell next year as well, the laying in of a large stock is an advantage, the consequence being that lack of capital is, in this industry, a far greater obstacle than lack of technical training.

If my present position had been predicted to me twenty years ago, I should have been unable to imagine myself in it. And yet — am I happy? Alas! there are moments when I think not.

I live in a high-class private hotel, where I occupy a luxurious suite of rooms. I own automobiles, and keep a chauffeur and a valet. I give myself every comfort that money can buy. But there is one thing which I crave and which money can not buy — happiness.

Many a pretty girl is setting her cap at me, but I know that it is only my dollars they want to marry. Nor do I care for any of them; while the one woman to whom my heart is calling — Anna — is married to another man, to one she loves.

My Success

I am lonely. Amid the pandemonium of my six hundred sewing-machines and the jingle of gold which they pour into my lap, I feel the deadly silence of solitude.

I associate with German-American Jews of high standing in the community; I contribute to their charity institutions; I belong to one of their reformed synagogues. But I often realize that I curry favor with them. I am continually thirsting for a heart-to-heart talk with some of the people whom I knew in my birthplace. I have tried to revive my old friendship with some of them; but they are poor, and my prosperity stands between us in many ways. Sometimes, when I am at home in my beautiful apartments, brooding over these things and nursing my loneliness, I say to myself: "There are cases when success is a tragedy."

One afternoon, as I walked along lower Broadway, I came across a shabby, bewhiskered old peddler in whom I instantly recognized one of my teachers — one of those who used to punish me for the sins of their other pupils. The past suddenly sprang into life with detailed, colorful vividness. The black pit of poverty in which I had been raised; my misery at school, where I had been treated as an outcast and a scapegoat because my mother could not afford even the few pennies that were charged for my tuition; the joy of my childish existence in spite of that gloom and martyrdom — all this rose from the dead before me.

The poor old peddler I now saw crossing Broadway had had some peculiar methods of inflicting pain on me. One of these had been to slap my face with one hand and to prod me in the ribs with the thumb of the other, the slaps and the thrusts alternating rhythmically. My little heart used to be full of curses for him. Yet now it was so thrillingly sweet to see him in New York! I rushed after him, greatly excited.

A tangle of wagons and trolley cars caused me some delay. I stood gazing at him restively as he picked his weary way. I had known him as a young man with a beard of flaming red. His beard was white now, and his rusty, crumpled American clothes gave him a dilapidated appearance.

As I was thus waiting impatiently for the cars to start so that I could cross the street and greet him, a cold, practical voice whispered to me: "Why court trouble? Leave him alone."

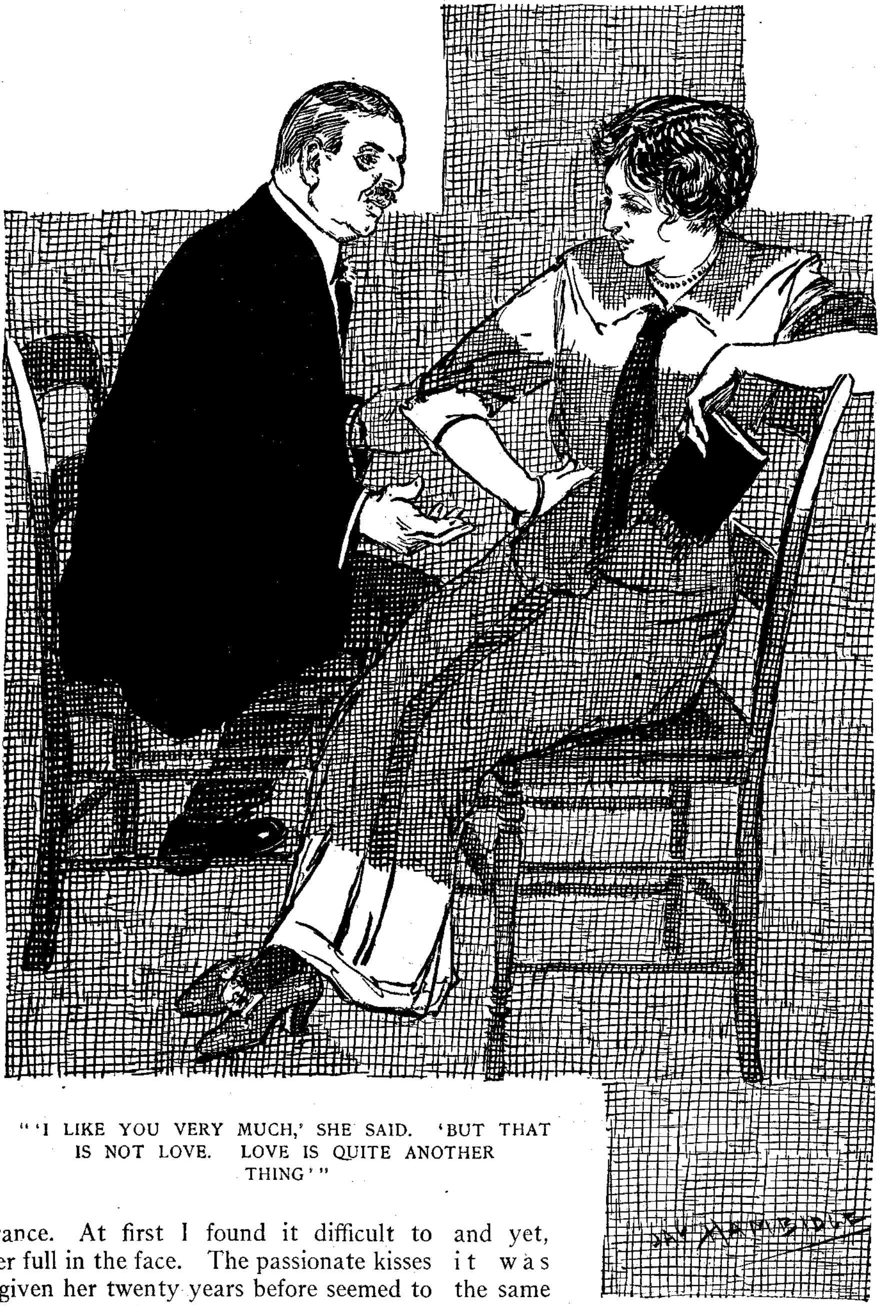
My exultation was gone; the spell was broken.

The block was presently relieved, but I did not stir. Instead of crossing the street and accosting the old man, I stood still, following him with my eyes until he vanished from view. Then I resumed my walk up Broadway. As I trudged along, a feeling of compunction took hold of me. By way of defending myself before my conscience, I tried to think of the unmerited beatings he used to give me. But it was of no avail. The idea of avenging myself on this decrepit, tattered old peddler for what he had done more than thirty years before made me feel small. "Poor devil! I must help him," I said to myself repeatedly. I was conscious of a desire to go back and try to overtake him; but I did not. The desire was a meandering, sluggish sort of feeling. The spell was broken irretrievably.

A Meeting with Sonya's Husband

This incident occurred on a summer day. In the following winter chance brought me together with Sonya. On this occasion our meeting was of a pleasanter nature than the one which had taken place at Cooper Institute. It was in a Jewish theater. She and another woman, accompanied by three men, were occupying a box adjoining one in which were the Chaikins and myself, and from which it was separated by a low partition. I bowed to her rather stiffly, and, to my surprise, she acknowledged my greeting with genial, hearty radiance. During the first intermission she invited me into her box. When I entered it and she introduced me to her companions, it turned out that one of the men — a physician — was her husband. He looked considerably younger than she, and it did not take long to discover that he was wrapped up in her. Her hair was beginning to turn gray, but she was as full of life and charm as ever.

This was the first opportunity I had had to take a good look at her since she had come to New York; for our first meeting had been so brief and so embarrassing to me that I had come away from it without a clear impression of her appearance. At first I found it difficult to look her full in the face. The passionate kisses I had given her twenty years before seemed to be staring me out of countenance. But she was perfectly unconstrained, and smiled and laughed with contagious exuberance.



"'I LIKE YOU VERY MUCH,' SHE SAID. 'BUT THAT IS NOT LOVE. LOVE IS QUITE ANOTHER THING'"

As we chatted I now and again grew absent-minded, indulging in a mental comparison between the woman who was talking to me now and the Sonya who had made me kiss her and so cruelly trifled with my passion shortly before she raised the money with which I made my journey to America. The change that the years had wrought in her appearance was striking; and yet, it was the same Sonya.

Nevertheless the sight and proximity of her left me calm. It was an indescribable pleasure to be with her, but my love for her was as dead as were the days when I lodged in a synagogue.

With Mrs. Chaikin's half-hearted consent, Sonya made her husband, the physician, change seats with me, so that I spent all the intermissions at her side; and after the performance we all had supper together.

She was still an active and devoted socialist, but the three or four years she had passed in America had sobered her somewhat, made her more practical and tolerant. Hence the cordial reception she could now get herself to give a "bourgeois," a "money-bag," like myself. Nor was this the only reason why the odium that had attached to me from her socialist point of view had abated. My "hands" were all members of the union now. Indeed, the Cloak-Makers' Union had become one of the largest and strongest labor organizations in the country, while we, the employers of the industry, were banded together into a powerful Manufacturers' Association, the two bodies having a joint Board of Sanitary Control and a joint Board of Arbitration.

Sonya Advises Me to Marry

Sonya and I talked of our native town and of her pious mother, who had died a few years before; but we carefully avoided the few days that I had spent in her mother's house, during which Sonya had encouraged my friendship. In answer to my questions, she told me something of her revolutionary experiences; but of these things she spoke reluctantly, as if it were a sacrilege to discuss them with a man who was, after all, a "money-bag." She inquired about my early struggles and subsequent successes. In dwelling on my affairs, I felt that I was far too effusive and boastful; but I went on bragging in spite of myself. However, this did not seem to arouse any criticism in her mind.

Referring to my unmarried state, she said, with unfeigned sympathy:

"This is really no life. You ought to get married."

"That's true," I answered, with a smile.

"If you ever marry, you must not neglect to invite me to the wedding," she commanded me gaily.

"I certainly won't; you may be sure of that," I said, and again I was unable to meet her eye.

I departed in a queer state of mind. Her present identity failed to touch a romantic chord in my heart. She was simply a memory. But as a memory she had rekindled some of the old yearning in me. I was in love with Tevkin's daughter and with the Sonya of twenty years ago at the same time.

I Send for My Old "Ship-Brother"—

The day of an immigrant's arrival in his new home is like a second birthday to him. So, two years ago, on the twentieth anniversary of my landing in Hoboken, I was in an extremely sentimental mood. Thoughts of the past filled me with mixed joy and sadness. I was overcome with a desire to celebrate the day. But with whom? Usually this is done by "ship-brothers," as East Siders call fellow immigrants who arrive here on the same boat. It came back to me that I had such a "ship-brother," and that it was Gitelson. Poor Gitelson! He was still working at his trade. I knew where he was employed, and I sent for him. His forelock was still the only bunch of gray hair on his head, but his face was weazened.

His appearance broke my heart.

"Do you know what day this is?" I said to him.

He did. I invited him to have dinner with me, and I took him to one of the best hotels in the city.

—and Pay an Old Debt

I tried to talk of our ship, of our arrival at Castle Garden. But he was extremely bashful, and his embarrassment communicated itself to me. Besides, his rather shabby clothes began to attract attention. I realized that I had made a mistake — that I should have taken him to some East Side restaurant. But then, the chasm between us seemed to be too wide for us to celebrate as "ship-brothers" in any place.

The champagne, to which he was not accustomed, made him tipsy. I became quite uneasy.

"By the way, Gitelson, I owe you something," I said, producing a ten-dollar bill. "It was with your ten dollars that I learned to be a cloak-maker and entered the trade. Do you remember?"

"Sure I do," he said, with inebriate shamefacedness, as he received the money and shoved it into the inside pocket of his vest.

Some minutes later, as I was returning to the loneliness of my beautiful lodgings, my heart was heavy with self-disgust and sadness, while echoing through my brain was the sentence:

"Such is the tragedy of my success! Such is the tragedy of my success!"

THE END

THE OPEN CIRCLE

A Peggy Story

BY

MARAVENE KENNEDY THOMPSON

AUTHOR OF "BLUE RIBBONS," "PEGGY SEES LIFE," ETC.

ILLUSTRATION BY CLARENCE F. UNDERWOOD

THE door was open between the living-room, where Mrs. Trowbridge sat, and the room designated as "office," in which were her husband and their neighbor, Tom Wilmers. The men's voices came to her distinctly. At first the voices held her attention. The door was usually closed, and she seldom heard her husband's business voice, something singularly different from the tones he used toward his wife and children. Soon the words caught her ears:

"What's Lew Robb doing now?"

"He was conductor on a trolley in Rochester, last I heard of him," came Tom Wilmers' voice, a voice that lacked the assured ring of the other's.

"And Jim Drake?"

"Clerking in Hansel's provision market in Buffalo."

"Um-m! He told me he was going to start a market of his own. Thought he didn't have enough capital. The mortgage about covered the value of the place — did, in fact, for any one but me. If it hadn't been right next to the Thomas place, that I got just before, I should have had to foreclose on Drake to square myself. Having the two farms bunched made Drake's worth the other thousand. Then Johnson's place was on the other side of Drake's, and I held the mortgage on that."

"And foreclosed it last month," said Wilmers sharply.

"After lending to within fourteen hundred of its market value. Johnson's now living in Buffalo on the fourteen hundred I paid on the deed, looking for a job, I understand. Sheldon told me yesterday that he had one promised — driving a delivery for a grocery."

"Does all this mean that you think I'll be looking for a job as driver of a delivery wagon next?" asked Wilmers, and again the tone was sharp, the sharpness of a man keyed above his normal pitch. "Well, I won't. But, if I am, my wife won't be eating her heart out for some one to talk to. City people boast about not knowing their next-door neighbors. They've got nothing on Redville in that, let me tell you, even if their boast was true. Which it's not. Mrs. Drake's had more callers in six months in Buffalo than she had all the twenty years she lived in that red farm-house at the Bend. She has church friends 'n' lodge friends 'n' club friends." His hand thumped the desk by which he sat. "You think it's bad business to mortgage my farm to get an automobile! But if your wife was away from her folks, and in a neighborhood whose women 'd let her dry-rot, for all of them, I guess she'd get an automobile or anything else that 'd add to her happiness. You're thinking that you can afford to humor your wife and I can't mine. Well, I will — if it means a delivery wagon or the back end of a street car for the rest of my days."

"'Nough said," laughed the other. "Now, just read this verse. It's a little formality that I always insist on. Then we'll proceed to business."

The verse, printed in italics on a card the size of a cabinet photograph and mounted in a silver frame, stood on the desk. Trowbridge pushed it forward.

Worm or beetle — drought or tempest —
On a farmer's land may fall;
But, for first-class ruination,
Trust a mortgage 'gainst them all.

Young Wilmers laughed harshly.

"All right. I've read it. Now ——"

"You can have the money in the morning," came in business tones. "The title's clear, which makes this an easier matter than some."

"You say the title's clear"— with another harsh laugh. "You were expecting me, then! And I s'pose you think my place is as good as in your pocket already!"

"To be frank, Wilmers, I do. If you were borrowing the money to improve your land, or to get machinery, or for any productive thing, I'd look on the matter differently. But if your farm hasn't earned enough over and above your living to buy an automobile now, there's little chance of your being able to pay the mortgage when it's due — with interest and the upkeep of an automobile added. My father-in-law's just bought an automobile — cash down. A few years ago he couldn't have bought a second-hand bicycle. Why not go over and talk to him? His farm's about the size of yours, and 'twas all he could do to squeeze a living out of it till he took up scientific farming. Now — well, John Patton's passed the line where we say a man's making a living, to the point where we call it making money. Farmers from all the Eastern States are buying the Patton seed potatoes."

"I'm not old enough to fall heir to a rich son-in-law," was the short answer.

"I've never helped John Patton to the extent of a dollar; nor have I been asked to," said Trowbridge quietly. "I'm a good many dollars in, trying to keep abreast of the old man's methods, though," he added, laughing in humorous appreciation. "I'm what you might term a natural conservative — it's always easier for me to think an old way is better than a new one. But I can see a thing when it's proved under my nose — which is lucky for me, all right."

"That your father and grandfather were rich men was lucky for you, too," said Wilmers dryly. "And that your Uncle Abe and your Aunt Lucy had no children of their own to leave their properties to."

"Yes; I guess you can call that luck. But I've doubled the whole of it, Wilmers, and I've another name for that. Your father left you your farm, too, and — honestly, I'd like to see you leave it clear and as much again to your son." He waited a moment. "Ten o'clock to-morrow morning; how's that?"

"I'll be here," Wilmers grunted.

Trowbridge passed in to the room where his wife was.

"You here! I thought you said you were going to your mother's."

"Or else you'd had the door shut," she laughed. "I'm glad you didn't know. You acted mighty decent to him, Ed."

"Better than the surly cuss deserved, all right. But he's on the raw now. The Wilmers are as proud as Lucifer. That place has been in the Wilmers family almost as long as this in the Trowbridge, and Tom'll be full as cut up over losing it as I'd be to see mine slip through my fingers. I'll give the Dutchman an interest and let him work it as a truck farm. I can't keep Herman a hand after this fall, anyhow. He's got a few dollars ahead and ambitions. He's mourned over Wilmers' place being planted to staples ever since he saw it. Lying as it does, sheltered from the north winds and the sun on it all day, he says, makes it a 'Gott-giben druck farm.' And I guess it does. The Dutchman's a sharp one. His innocent seeming question as to what I'd lease him the unplowed corners in all my fields for, put me wise for the first time to the value of those corners. Since then I've planted to the fence-rail. But nobody's going to teach Tom Wilmers anything," he laughed, somewhat scoffingly. "I knew that my advice to go see your father was thrown away when I gave it."

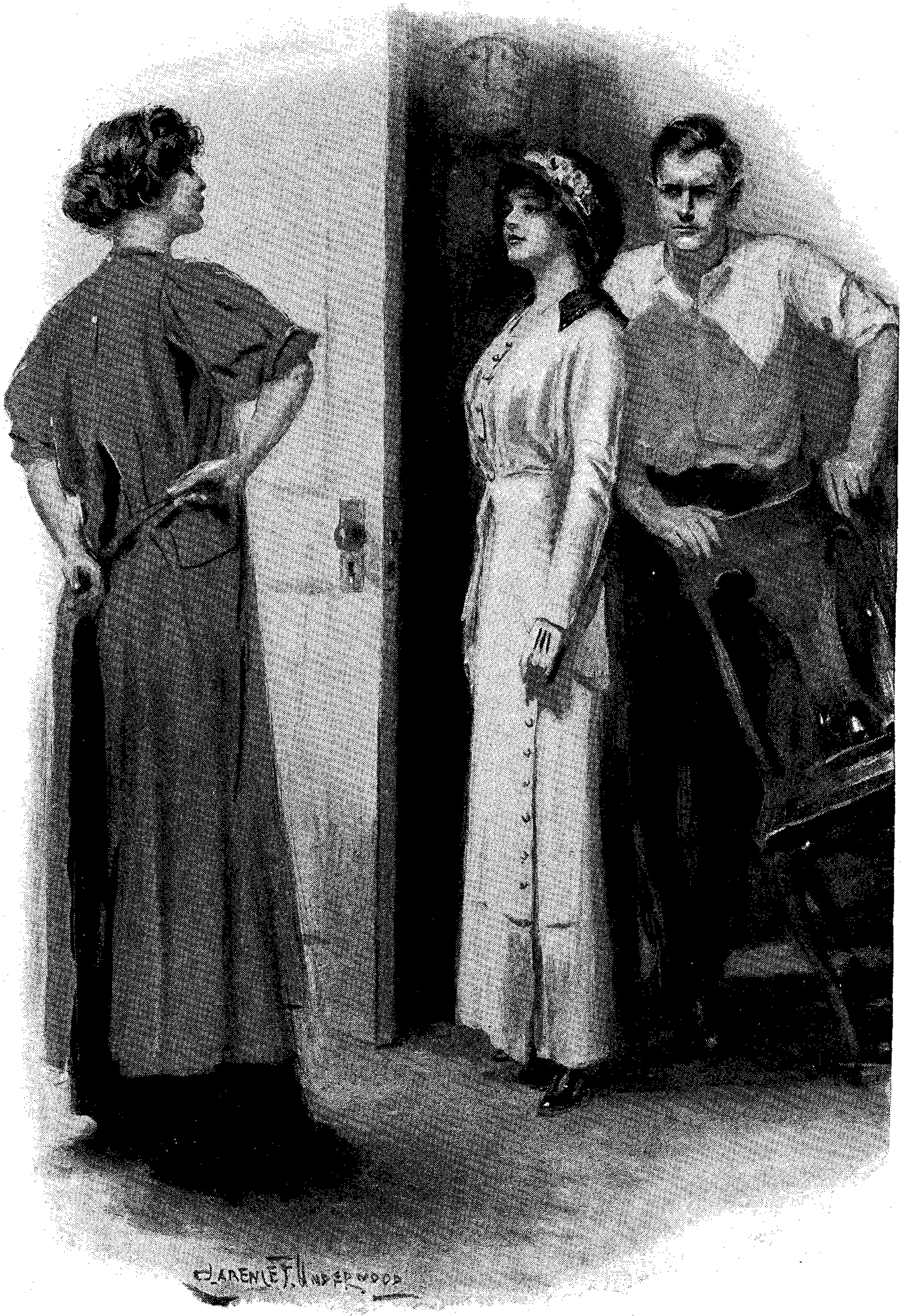
"But why didn't *you* tell him about turning it into a truck farm!" cried his wife.

"I guess that would have been the last blow to Wilmers," chuckled the man. "A truck farm's beneath his dignity altogether. Then, it's not the regulation thing round here. Plant to wheat and corn and potatoes, no matter what kind of land you've got — slap on a mortgage, and continue to plant this year same's you did last. Then"— he laughed again —"a delivery wagon and a cozy tenement! I'm going over to Endwater, and I've got to use the big car. But if you want to take the boys with you to your mother's, I can run you over now and get you as I come home."

"I don't — think — I'll go to see — ma to-day, Ed." She gazed up into his face, somewhat piteously. "Are you — *sure* Mr. Wilmers won't be able to pay off the mortgage, ever?"

"Nothing's sure; but it's a hundred to one shot he won't." He caught her up to kiss her good-by. "Now, little girl, don't you worry about Tom Wilmers. It's his funeral. And he's no one to blame but himself — blind bat!"

Peggy walked to a window, after her husband had left, and looked down at a white-gabled house that stood on a slope about two miles away. The Trowbridge farm home occupied the highest piece of land for miles around. The country on every side rolled gradually to this summit, and so very gradually that only at the top did realization of its full altitude come. From the window where Peggy stood she could


CLARENCE F. UNDERWOOD

"'THANK YOU, MRS. TROWBRIDGE, FOR YOUR INTEREST IN MY HUSBAND,' SHE SAID TENSELY, AND OPENED THE DOOR. 'I BID YOU GOOD MORNING'" see the village of Redville, three miles away; a lake to the left of it; a little river that meandered through billowing fields of grain; scattering houses, some standing out boldly in the open, some half hid by surrounding trees. It was a magnificent stretch of country. The view was one to rhapsodize over, with the green earth, purplish waters, and blue sky coalescing their colors into an opalesque glory.

Peggy's gaze was very intent; but she saw consciously only one thing — the house where a young wife was "eating her heart out for some one to talk to."

"Oh!" she said suddenly,— a sharp "oh!" of pain,— and brought her hands up against her heart — a heart that was burning with shame.

Only two miles away! And Mrs. Wilmers was a stranger in Redville — and she had never once been to see her!

The Wilmers place was off the main road. Perhaps if she had passed the house ——

"No," her heart answered honestly; "I just didn't think about it, is all. I have my friends, and I'm not lonesome, and because I didn't need her company I didn't think about her needing mine."

Her eyes turned upon house after house in the distance. Nor had she been in this house, nor this, nor this. Mr. Wilmers had spoken about Mrs. Drake's having more friends in Buffalo than here. She could not well have fewer — if all Redville had treated her as Mrs. Trowbridge had. Nor did it lessen Peggy's own shame to know that the neighborhood was distinctly unsocial. She had not realized it before — that, though she knew all about her neighbors, she knew *them* scarcely at all! She had a little close circle — her mother; a few friends in Redville village; a few in Greencastle, her girlhood home; several intimates in Endwater, the county seat; "these few and no more."

And every one about her was the same! Each with her own close circle. Only that each may not have voluntarily drawn the circle close for herself, but may have had it drawn for her. Mrs. Wilmers was very reserved, she had been told — she had not known this for herself, she thought miserably. And Tom Wilmers was reserved almost to churlishness. His wife could not expect to draw friends through him. Nor was his the exuberant, overflowing personality of her own husband, who could fill the house to forgetfulness of the presence of others. Wilmers could only love his wife silently — and mortgage his homestead for an automobile to lessen her loneliness! Smarting tears crept from under Peggy's lashes.

"He said Ed would do as much for me. And Ed would, too! Only Ed don't have to And — and — poor Tom Wilmers ——"

Mrs. Wilmers dropped the garment she was rubbing into the tub, took her hands from the soap-suds, dried them hastily on her apron, and went to answer the sharp rapping on the front door.

"Hello! Hel-lo! Wa-it!"

The words were not addressed to Mrs. Wilmers, but to Mrs. Wilmers' husband. The man, stalking toward the wheat-field beyond, turned back at the imperative call and frantically waving arms.

Peggy stood on the little stoop, her lips parted in excitement, her impatient eyes fastened on the slowly moving figure of the man. She did not hear the door open, nor see Mrs. Wilmers' eyes travel over her from head to foot — over the rose-trimmed hat, over the smart pongee frock with its unmistakable tailored stamp, over the silk-clad ankles with the little tan slippers to match. This on Monday morning — with Mrs. Wilmers in blue print, hair carelessly knotted, and hands reddened with hot suds!

"Do you want to see me — or my husband?" asked Mrs. Wilmers coldly. And another note than coldness trembled in her voice.

Peggy turned, almost bursting with her pent-up tenderness, hardly able to await the scheduled time of its unfoldment.

"I want to see both of you," she cried. "Him for a little bit, and then you for a long, long while!"

Tom Wilmers came up the steps of the stoop. He was still "on the raw." He had the feeling that he wanted to kick some one, and was no more amiable because he suspected that the "some one" should be himself. But there is a purging quality in sunshine. And it was very brilliant, very entrancing sunshine, indeed, that now radiated from Peggy's blissful face. The bitterness left Wilmers' eyes. He smiled a welcome, with the instinctive masculine tribute to feminine loveliness. He did not see his wife's face stiffen, nor note her coldness as she led the way to the living-room.

It was a large, sunny room, simply furnished. But one glance sufficed to show that Mrs. Wilmers had an eye for harmony of color and line, which was as rare in Redville as elsewhere. The room had not yet received its daily cleaning; the washing had come first. Dust showed plainly on the surface of the furniture; newspapers were strewn about. The hostess saw only the untidiness. Peggy did not see the untidiness at all, nor anything in detail — now. Afterward she saw the whole room in retrospect

— every chair and book and picture; and one thing, an etching of a woman standing alone by a broken stone gate, Peggy saw ceaselessly.

She was too full of her subject now for her mind to encompass anything else. She began upon it at once, tumbling out the words in her hurry for its import to reach her hearers.

"I accidentally overheard you and Mr. Trowbridge talking together just now," she explained. "And ——"

The "and" was quite a story before Peggy had finished. It included her husband's statements, and some of the inside history of her father's success, and conversations she had had with Herman on truck-farming, and many of Peggy's own views on all of these matters.

Peggy's eyes hid behind a thick curtain of lashes when she felt a little afraid of the reception of her words, and came out with fascinating suddenness when she had safely passed the danger point. And she blushed, and dimpled, and tilted her head at deliciously attractive angles, as unconscious of herself the while as a bird trilling out its song-filled heart.

Mrs. Wilmers had never seen any one like Peggy, in whom the child and the woman alternated at a breath, and who had been smiled on so lavishly all her life that she accepted smiles and admiration as a natural feminine due. Mrs. Wilmers immediately branded Mrs. Trowbridge as a coquette — and a coquette of the most brazen sort; for all of this battery of loveliness was directed flagrantly upon the husband, and, crowning insult! the husband drank it all in with rapt eyes — really, with rapt ears.

Edna Wilmers did not know till this moment that her husband had planned to get her an automobile. She was deeply touched by the heroic sacrifice it involved; and she was truly glad that she had learned the truth in time to prevent the purchase. She was a sweet, true, more than ordinarily sensible young woman. But she was already bitter toward Mrs. Trowbridge for her long neglect. Tom had told her that the elder Mrs. Trowbridge and Mrs. Wilmers had been neighbors, and Tom had expected that the younger women would be warm friends. Edna had expected it, too; and every day, during those first months, she had arrayed herself and put her house in order, in preparation for Mrs. Trowbridge's call. And every day, and every day, Mrs. Trowbridge had not come! She had heard the grinding noise of the automobile as it climbed the little grade just beyond Wilmers Lane, and had waited for it to make the turn that should bring it before her door — waited and waited.

Then she had known that Mrs. Trowbridge would not come — or any one. Visiting was done as neighbor met with neighbor driving to and from town, or beside a gate on the way, while a horse impatiently pawed the ground. Her own gate was not on a traveled road. Tom's wayside visiting consisted of a brief "How d'y' do" and no more. She could count on the fingers of one hand the guests who had come to her house on a purely social visit. This in two years. And she had been brought up in a village, with its intimate social life.

And she had wanted to know Mrs. Trowbridge so desperately, had gazed up at the big house on the summit with such frenzied longing, that it had seemed as if its mistress must come! Once, in her crazed loneliness, she had begged Tom to take her up there. She wondered now, bitterly, why Tom hadn't — since he seemed to find such rapture in contemplating Mrs. Trowbridge.

Mrs. Wilmers, blinded by her jealousy, and her two years' accumulated bitterness, saw none of the tenderness and childish supplication for forgiveness in Peggy's glances directed shyly toward herself. To Edna Wilmers these glances meant that Mrs. Trowbridge was keeping an eye on the wife to see how much further she could safely exercise her wanton fascinations on the husband.

Tom Wilmers sat silent after Peggy had finished. He was overcome by his stupidity in not having seen for himself the simple a-b-c facts that Peggy pointed out. Still speechless, his eyes rested full upon her, eyes that blazed hotly with the quickened blood of hope within him. Peggy read their silent message, and sighed blissfully, her own soul relieved of some of its burden.

Edna Wilmers looked on — a moment. Then she rose, walked over to the door, stood beside it — a hostess ready to bid her guest adieu. Peggy, still waiting for some spoken appreciation from Wilmers, gave no thought whatever to this move. But Edna Wilmers allowed no misconstruction of her attitude.

"Thank you, Mrs. Trowbridge, for your — interest in my husband," she said tensely, and *opened the door.*

"Edna!"

Wilmers' voice did not hold a reprimand, but dismay — utter, blank.

Peggy, with a frozen stillness that held her feet to the floor, stood for a fraction of a second and gazed at Mrs. Wilmers' compressed face — a face no longer "sweet," as Peggy had thought it, but hard, bitter, twisted into distorting lines. The hostess gazed back.

"I bid you good morning, Mrs. Trowbridge."

Somehow Peggy got across the threshold,

somehow reached her automobile, somehow found herself at home.

"What's gone wrong?" asked her husband, in the evening. "You look as though —" He stopped, his eyes on her face inquiringly. "I never saw you look like this before. Come, Peggy, tell me, and get that frost-bitten look out of your eyes."

Peggy's lips opened, but she did not speak. She could not. Even to her husband she could not reveal the awful thing that had happened to her.

She had been driven out of a woman's house like ——

Peggy could not complete the insulting simile. And she could not forget it, not for one brief hour. At times she felt as if she were shriveling under the fire of humiliation that swept and re-swept her. She did not dwell upon her kindness that had preceded the outrage. Just one thought lay naked in her mind: *She had been driven out of Mrs. Wilmers' house.*

For two weeks — such weeks as Peggy had never spent before — she lived with this thought, and hated Edna Wilmers with a still, deadly hatred. She was glad that Mrs. Wilmers had no friends, glad that she would be forced to leave the Wilmers homestead, and carry the burden that it was through her that her husband had lost it.

But some folks are blessed — cursed, in their own opinion ofttimes — with a faculty for finding truth, no matter how covered up with barnacles of thought it may be. Slowly, with premonitory twinges and upheavings that came, and subsided, and came again, each time a little more tumultuous, a little more destructive of its bonds, the truth — the primal factor in the case between her and Mrs. Wilmers — lay exposed before Peggy's eyes.

The call that Peggy had not made — *this* was the trouble out of which all the succeeding trouble had sprung. If Peggy had been friendly with Mrs. Wilmers, there would have been no devastating loneliness, no need of a mortgage to buy an automobile, no unsolicited message for Peggy to carry pell-mell to Tom Wilmers.

"If she and I had visited back and forth, why, Ed would have been interested in them, and he would have told Tom long ago all that I told him."

Peggy had come a good way, and along a very thorny road, before she could utter this. Yes; she had been wrong — first; she faced this now, bravely.

But nothing — nothing — could excuse Edna Wilmers' act, her heart cried fiercely. And she hated her!

This hatred — or something — kept Mrs. Wilmers in Peggy's mind unceasingly. When Peggy looked out of a window, she saw *her* home — where *she* was lonely. And when Peggy tucked her children and their nurse on the back seat of the big car, and took her place at the wheel, she saw an empty seat beside her where *she* could be sitting just as well as not.

Then Peggy read some book reviews in the Endwater *Journal* signed "E. J. W." "Edna Jackson Wilmers," whispered Peggy, and read the reviews with a careful measuring of their content. She bought the books that she had not yet read.

"I should have liked her, I know," the whispering continued.

Four dreadful weeks passed. Peggy stood on the veranda and looked down at a sloping stretch of green where a white-gabled house up-reared itself, like a tombstone over Peggy's happiness. And a tombstone it should always be *until* ——

"But I can't!" she protested aloud. "I can't! I can't!"

"Well, I know what you can do," said her husband's voice beside her. "And I know what you're going to do." He seated himself on the wide rail of the veranda and lifted her beside him. "Come — the whole story! You've agonized over this business long enough. What is it — uplift? — or that troublesome conscience of yours on a toot? Come, out with it!"

The man listened quietly while Peggy, whispering and sobbing, her face averted the while, told the story of her visit.

"So it was you! I saw that Tom had got a hunch somewhere. His wife ought to have crawled on her hands and knees to thank you. And she turned you out! What that woman needs is a good trouncing."

"But I should have gone to call on her two years ago," came faintly. "It's my fault, really; don't you see, Ed?"

"Come, forget it!" returned her husband sharply. "My wife isn't going to take any such blow as this and turn the other cheek. Not much! If you'll get dressed on the double-quick, we can get the five-o'clock train for Buffalo. We'll have supper and go to the theater — and see if you can't lose some cobwebs out of your head on the way," he laughed. "How's this?"

"This" always had its appeal for Peggy. Her drooping spirits instantly revived. Her eyes, catching a glimpse of the white-gabled house while she was hurriedly changing her dress, viewed it now with superb indifference. Her husband was honorable, and he didn't think she was wrong. "Cobwebs"— that was just what these miserable rankling thoughts were, and she should lose them on the way, every one!

Only — she didn't. Peggy found herself walking down the road, next day — not speeding along in an automobile, nor behind a spirited horse, nor mounted on one, but walking humbly, as befitted her sackcloth-and-ashes attitude of mind. A mile, another half mile, and Peggy came to the lane that led to the Wilmers' house. She took a few steps along this — stopped. The nausea of that other day's deadly insult rushed over her. Swiftly she turned and retraced her steps to the main road. Her heart was palpitating madly, not with exertion, but with her fear of this force within her that had made her almost go to this woman's house again.

An automobile was approaching, and the driver's gaze was directed on Peggy's retreating figure. Peggy dropped her eyes as she recognized her husband. She stepped into the machine, silent, still with downcast eyes. She did not look up, all the way home, for fear that her husband was laughing at her, or was frowning over her spiritless conduct. But Edwin Trowbridge's look was merely speculative; he was wondering how long it would be before Peggy would go again.

She did not go the next day, nor the next. But on the third day she walked out of the gateway and down the road, her step deliberate, her face strangely mature. There were no cobwebs in her head now.

She shivered just a little as Mrs. Wilmers opened the door.

"I have come to call on you," she said in a low voice. "I should have come two years ago. I'm sorry I didn't. But — I've come — now."

Edna Wilmers did not speak. She stood as if stricken dumb, gripping the door-knob, looking at her visitor with eyes that wore deep circles and were red from continuous weeping.

Peggy waited another moment.

"Good-by," she said then — gently, because, in a strange way, she knew that Edna Wilmers' tragic countenance was the outcome of that unpaid call of two years ago.

"No — not good-by," cried a heartbroken voice. And Edna Wilmers' hands led her in. Then Edna Wilmers' story came forth — an anguished story of belated understanding, and remorse, and loneliness, and quarrels with her husband over that awful morning, with reconciliations that never fully brought peace.

"I didn't dream that you could forgive me. I should have crawled all the way to your house if I had believed that I could make you understand!" sobbed the girl, over and over, in a torrent of self-reproach.

Peggy sprang up. "Come, let's see if we can see my house from here as plain as I can see yours!"

Together, on the lawn, they looked up at the Trowbridge home, then at the other houses within their vision.

Then, very earnestly and a little exaggeratedly, because their spirits had been touched and they were optimistically young, they planned to seek out and to banish any loneliness that might be hid behind the walls of these houses. Theirs should be, they agreed, an open circle with a place always open to the stranger, the lonely, the "heart eating itself out for some one to talk to."

That evening, Peggy's husband, after hearing her story, put his hand over his eyes in a playful gesture, as if to save them from being blinded by Peggy's dazzling countenance.

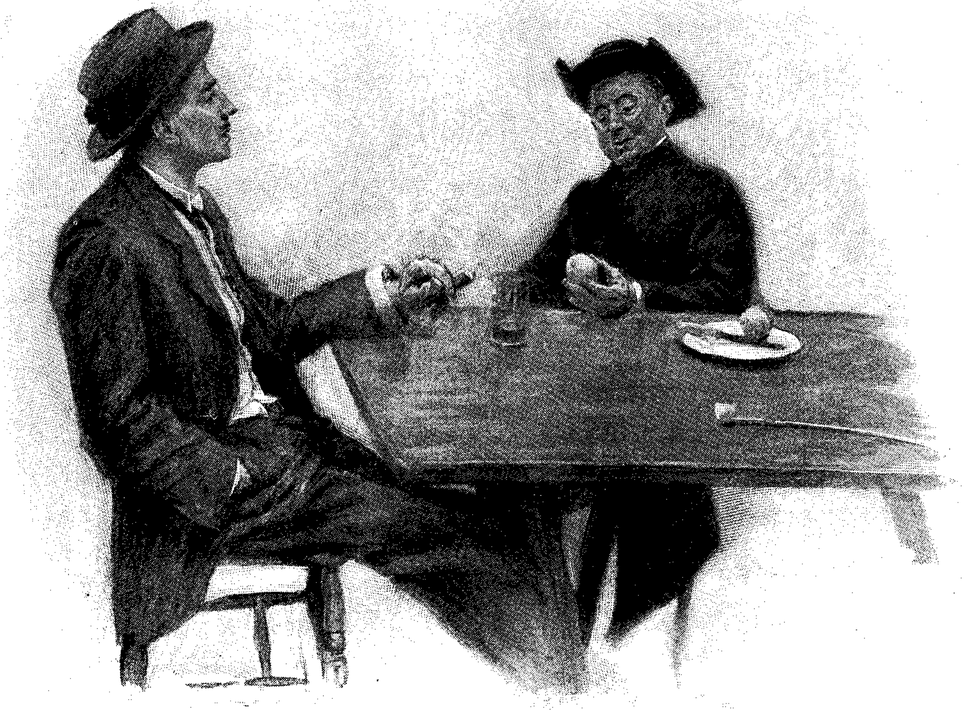
"But you look as if you had found something fine to-day, too," she laughed. "What is it?"

"You," he answered.

*IN AUGUST — "**AFTER THIRTY,**" BY JULIAN STREET.*

*"**AFTER THIRTY**" IS AS GOOD AS ITS TITLE — AND ITS TITLE IS A MASTERPIECE. IT IS A STORY OF FOUR CHARMING AND CLEVER PEOPLE, WHOSE CLEVERNESS AND CHARM DOES NOT SAVE THEM FROM ABSURD AND OUTRAGEOUS COMPLICATIONS. IT STARTS WITH ONE AMUSING SITUATION AND IT RUNS INTO HALF A DOZEN OTHERS BEFORE THE END. IT IS A SATIRE, AN ADVENTURE, A LOVE STORY, ALL IN ONE.*

*LOOK FOR "**AFTER THIRTY,**" WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG.*



"'THERE'S ONE THING I DON'T LIKE ABOUT THE DUKE'S WIG,' SAID FATHER BROWN—'THE COLOR'"

THE PURPLE WIG

A New Appearance of Father Brown

BY GILBERT K. CHESTERTON

AUTHOR OF "THE MAN IN THE PASSAGE," ETC.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY WILLIAM HATHERELL

MR. EDWARD BUTTON, the industrious editor of the *Daily Reformer*, sat at his desk, opening letters and marking proofs to the merry tune of a typewriter worked by a vigorous young lady. He was a stoutish, fair man, in his shirt sleeves; his movements were resolute, his mouth firm, and his tones final; but his round, rather babyish blue eyes had a bewildered and even wistful look that rather contradicted all this. Nor, indeed, was the expression altogether misleading. It might truly be said of him, as of many journalists in authority, that his most familiar emotion was one of continuous fear: fear of libel actions, fear of lost advertisements, fear of misprints, fear of the sack. His life was a series of distracted compromises between the proprietor of the paper (and of himself), who was a senile soap-boiler with three ineradicable mistakes in his mind, and the very able staff he had collected to run the paper; some of whom were brilliant and experienced men and — what was even worse — sincere enthusiasts for the political policy of the paper. A letter from one of these lay immediately before him; and, rapid and resolute though he was, he seemed almost to hesitate before opening it. He took up a strip of proof instead, ran down it with a blue eye and a blue pencil, altered the word "adultery" to the word "impropriety" and the word "Jew" to the word "alien," rang a bell, and sent the proof flying upstairs. Then, with a more thoughtful eye, he ripped open the letter from his more distinguished contributor, which bore a postmark of Devonshire and ran as follows:

Dear Button:

As I see you're working Spooks and Dooks at the same time, what about an article on that rum business of the Eyres of Exmoor; or, as the old women call it down here, the Devil's Ear of Eyre? The head of the family now, you know, is the Duke of Exeter; he is one of the few really stiff old Tory aristocrats left, a sound old crusted tyrant it is quite in our line to make trouble about. And I think I'm on the track of a story that will make trouble.

Of course I don't believe in the old legend about James I; and, as for you, you don't believe in anything, not even in journalism. The legend, you'll probably remember, was about the blackest business in English history — the poisoning of Overbury by that witch's cat Frances Howard; and the quite mysterious terror which forced the King to pardon the murderers. There was a lot of alleged witchcraft mixed up with it; and the story goes that a man-servant listening at a keyhole heard the truth in a talk between the King and Carr; and the bodily ear with which he heard grew large and monstrous as by magic, so awful was the secret. And, though he had to be loaded with lands and gold and made an ancestor of Dukes, the elf-shaped ear is still recurrent in the family. Well, you don't believe in black magic; and, if you did, you couldn't use it for copy. If a miracle happened in your office, you'd have to hush it up, now so many bishops are Agnostics. But that is not the point. The point is that there really *is* something queer about Exeter and his family; something quite natural, I daresay, but quite abnormal. And the Ear is in it somehow, I fancy; either a symbol or a delusion or a disease or something. Another tradition says that Cavaliers just after James I began to wear their hair long only to cover the ear of the first Lord Exeter. This also is, no doubt, fanciful.

The reason I point it out to you is this. It seems to me that we make a mistake in attacking aristocracy entirely for its champagne and diamonds. Most men rather admire the nobs for having a good time; but I think we surrender too much when we admit that aristocracy has made even the aristocrats happy. I suggest a series of articles pointing out how dreary, how inhuman, how downright diabolic, is the very smell and atmosphere of some of these great houses. There are plenty of instances; but you couldn't begin with a better one than the Ear of the Eyres. By the end of the week I think I can get you the truth about it.

Yours ever,
FRANCIS FINN.

Mr. Button reflected a moment, staring at his left boot; then he called out in a strong, loud, and entirely lifeless voice, in which every syllable sounded alike:

"Miss Barlow, take down a letter to Mr. Finn, please. 'Dear Finn: I think it would do; copy should reach us second post Saturday. Yours, E. Button.'"

This elaborate epistle he articulated as if it were all one word; and Miss Barlow rattled it down as if it were all one word. Then he took up another strip of proof and a blue pencil, and altered the word "supernatural" to the word "marvelous" and the expression "shoot down" to the expression "repress."

In such happy, healthful activities did Mr. Button disport himself until the ensuing Saturday found him at the same desk, dictating to the same typist, and using the same blue pencil on the first instalment of Mr. Finn's revelations. The opening was a sound piece of slashing invective about the evil secrets of princes and despair in the high places of the earth. Though written violently, it was in excellent English; but the editor, as usual, had given to somebody else the task of breaking it up into subheadings, which were of a spicier sort, as "Peeress and Poisons," "The Eerie Ear," "The Eyres in their Eerie," and so on through a hundred happy changes. Then followed the legend of the Ear, amplified from Finn's first letter, and then the substance of his later discoveries, as follows:

I KNOW it is the practice of journalists to put the end of the story at the beginning and call it a headline. I know that journalism largely consists in saying "Lord Jones Dead" to people who never knew that Lord Jones was alive. Your present correspondent thinks that this, like many other journalistic customs, is bad journalism, and that the *Daily Reformer* has to set a better example in such things. He proposes to tell his story as it occurred, step by step. He will use the real names of the people concerned, who in most cases are ready to confirm his testimony. As for the headlines, the sensational proclamations, they will come at the end.

I was walking along a public path which threads through a private Devonshire orchard, and seems to point towards Devonshire cider, when I came suddenly upon just such a place as the path suggested. It was a long, low inn, consisting really of a cottage and two barns, thatched all over with the thatch that looks like brown and grey hair grown before history. But outside the door was a sign which called it the Blue Dragon; and under the sign was one of those long rustic tables that used to stand outside most of the free English inns before teetotallers and brewers, between them, destroyed freedom. And at this table sat three gentlemen who might have lived a hundred years ago.

Now that I know them all better, there is no difficulty about disentangling the impressions; but just then they looked like three very solid ghosts. The dominant figure, both because he was bigger in all three dimensions, and because he sat centrally in the length of the table, facing me, was a tall, fat man, dressed completely in black, with a rubicund and even apoplectic visage, but a rather bald and rather bothered brow. Looking at him again more closely, I could not exactly say what it was that gave me the sense of antiquity, except the antique cut of his white clerical necktie and the barred wrinkles across his brow. It was even less easy to fix the impression in the man at the left end of the table, who, to say truth, was as commonplace a person as could be seen anywhere — with a round, brown-haired head and a round snub nose, but also clad in clerical black, of a stricter cut. It was only when I saw his broad curved hat lying on the table beside him that I realized why I connected him with anything ancient. He was a Roman Catholic priest. Perhaps the third man, at the other end of the table, had really more to do with it than the rest, though he was both slighter in physical presence and more inconsiderate in his dress. His lank limbs were clad — I might almost say clutched — in very tight grey sleeves and pantaloons; he had a long, sallow, aquiline face, which seemed somehow all the more saturnine because his lantern jaws were imprisoned in his collar and neck-cloth more in the style of the old stock; and his hair (which ought to have been dark brown) was of an odd dim russet colour which, in conjunction with his yellow face, looked rather purple than red. The unobtrusive yet unusual colour was all the more notable because his hair was almost unnaturally healthy and curling and he wore it full. But, after all analysis, I incline to think that what gave me my first old-fashioned impression was simply a set of tall, old-fashioned wine-glasses, one or two lemons, and two churchwarden pipes. And also, perhaps, the old-world errand on which I had come.

Being a hardened reporter, and it being apparently a public inn, I did not need to summon much of my impudence to sit down at the long table and order some cider. The big man in black seemed very learned, especially about local antiquities; the small man in black, though he talked much less, surprised me with a yet wider culture. So we got on very well together. But the third man, the old gentleman in the tight pantaloons, seemed rather distant and haughty, until I slid into the subject of the Duke of Exeter and his ancestry. I thought the subject seemed to embarrass the other two a little; but it broke the spell of the third man's silence most successfully.

Speaking with restraint and with the accent of a highly educated gentleman, and puffing at intervals at his long church-warden pipe, he proceeded to tell me some of the most horrible stories I have ever heard in my life: how one of the Eyres in former ages had hanged his own father; and another had his wife scourged at the cart-tail through the village; and another had set fire to a church full of children; and so on. Some of the tales, indeed, are not fit for a public print; such as the story of the Scarlet Nuns, the abominable story of the Spotted Dog, or the thing that was done in the quarry. And all this red roll of impieties came from his thin, genteel lips rather primly than otherwise, as he sat sipping the wine out of his tall, thin glass.

I could see that the big man opposite me was trying, if anything, to stop him; but he evidently held the old gentleman in considerable respect, and could not venture to do so at all abruptly. And the little priest at the other end of the table, though free from any such air of fear or embarrassment, looked steadily at the table, and seemed to listen to the recital with great pain — as well he might.

"You don't seem," I said, "to be very fond of the Exeter pedigree."

He looked at me a moment, his lips still prim, but whitening and tightening; then he deliberately broke his long pipe and glass on the table, and stood up, the very picture of a perfect gentleman with the flaming temper of a fiend.

"These gentlemen," he said, "will tell you whether I have cause to like it. The Curse of the Eyres of old has lain heavy on this country, and many have suffered from it. They know there are none who have suffered from it as I have."

And with that he crushed a piece of the fallen glass under his heel, and strode away amid the green twilight of the twinkling apple trees.

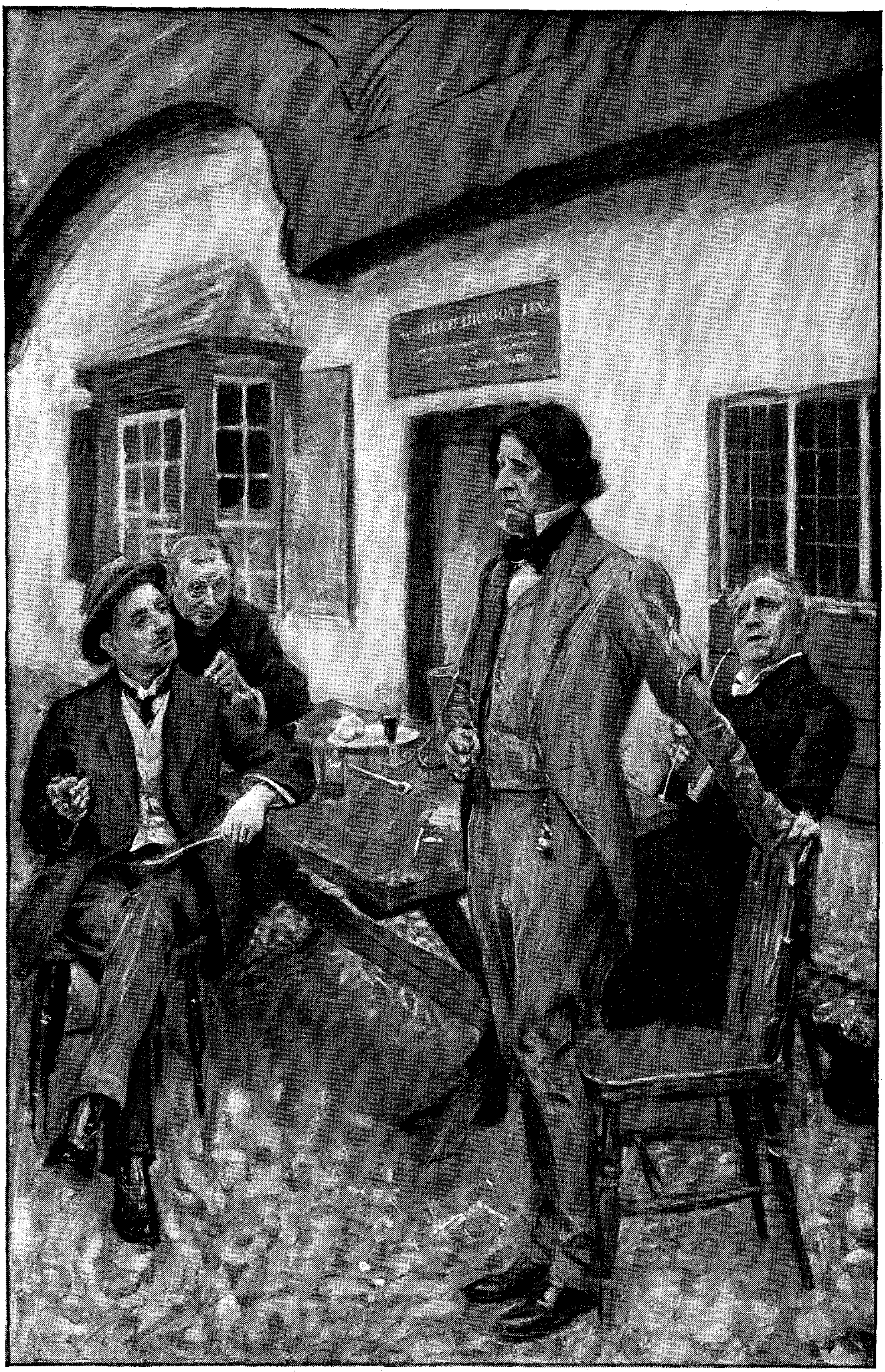
"That is an extraordinary old gentleman," I said to the other two. "Do you happen to know what the Exeter family has done to him? Who is he?"

The big man in black was staring at me with the wild air of a baffled bull; he did not at first seem to take it in. Then he said, at last: "Don't you know who he is?"

I reaffirmed my ignorance, and there was another silence. Then the little priest said, still looking at the table:

"That is the Duke of Exeter."

Then, before I could collect my scattered



"HE STOOD UP, THE VERY PICTURE OF A PERFECT GENTLEMAN WITH THE FLAMING TEMPER OF A FIEND. 'THERE ARE NONE WHO HAVE SUFFERED AS I HAVE FROM THE CURSE OF THE EYRES,' HE CRIED" senses, he added, equally quietly, but with an air of regularizing things: "My friend, here, is Dr. Mull, the Duke's librarian. My name is Brown."

"But," I stammered, "if that is the Duke, why does he damn all the old Dukes like that?"

"He seems really to believe," answered the priest called Brown, "that they have left a curse on him." Then he added, with some irrelevance: "That's why he wears a wig."

It was a few minutes before its meaning dawned on me.

"You don't mean that fable about the fantastic ear?" I demanded. "I've heard of it, of course; but surely it must be a superstitious yarn spun out of something much simpler. I've sometimes thought it was a wild version of one of those mutilation stories. They used to crop criminals' ears in the sixteenth century."

"I hardly think it was that," answered the little man thoughtfully; "but it is not outside ordinary science or natural law for a family to have some deformity frequently reappearing — such as one ear bigger than the other."

The big librarian had buried his big bald brow in his big red hands, like a man trying to think out his duty.

"No," he groaned. "You do the man a wrong, after all. Understand, I've no reason to defend him, or even to keep faith with him. He has been a tyrant to me, as to everybody else. Don't fancy, because you see him sitting simply here, that he isn't a great lord in the worst sense of the word. He would fetch a man a mile to ring a bell a yard off, if it would summon another man three miles to fetch a matchbox three yards off. He must have a footman to carry his walking-stick, and a body-servant to hold up his opera-glasses ——"

"But not a valet to brush his clothes," cut in the priest, with a curious dryness; "for the valet would want to brush his wig too."

The librarian turned to him, and seemed to forget my presence; he was strongly moved and, I think, a little heated with wine.

"I don't know how you know it, Father Brown," he said, "but you are right. He lets the whole world do everything for him, except dress him. And that he insists on doing in a literal solitude like a desert. Anybody is kicked out of the house without a character who is so much as found near his dressing-room door."

"He seems a pleasant old party," I remarked.

"No," replied Dr. Mull quite simply; "and yet, that is just what I mean by saying you are unjust to him, after all. Gentlemen, the Duke does really feel the bitterness about the family curse that he uttered just now. He does, with sincere shame and terror, hide under that purple wig something he thinks it would blast the sons of men to see. I know it is so; and I know it is not a mere natural disfigurement, like a criminal mutilation or hereditary disproportion in the features. I know it is worse than that; because a man told me who was present at a scene that no man could invent, where a stronger man than any of us tried to defy the secret, and was scared away from it."

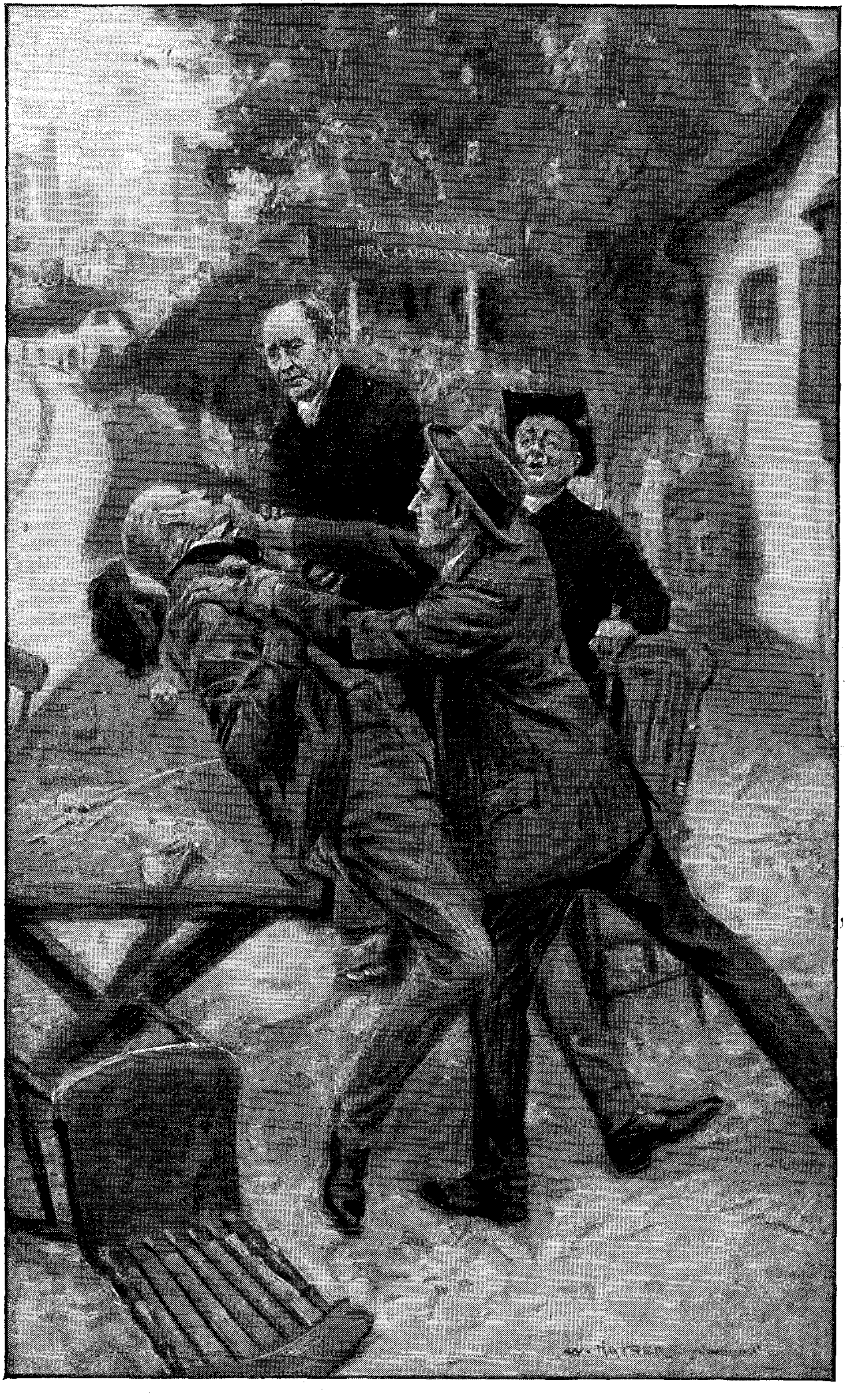
I opened my mouth to speak; but Mull went on, in oblivion of me, speaking out of the cavern of his hands:

"I don't mind telling you, father, because it's really more defending the poor Duke than giving him away. Didn't you ever hear of the time when he very nearly lost all the estates?"

The priest shook his head; and the librarian proceeded to tell the tale as he had heard it from his predecessor in the same post, who had been his patron and instructor, and whom he seemed to trust implicitly. Up to a certain point it was a common enough tale of the decline of a great family's fortunes — the tale of a family lawyer. This lawyer, however, had the sense to cheat honestly, if the expression explains itself. Instead of using funds he held in trust, he took advantage of the Duke's carelessness to put the family in a financial hole, in which it might be necessary for the Duke to let him hold them in reality. The lawyer's name was Isaac Green, but the Duke always called him Elisha; presumably in reference to the fact that he was quite bald, though certainly not more than thirty. He had risen very rapidly, but from very dirty beginnings, being first a "nark," or informer, and then a money-lender, but as solicitor to the Eyres he had the sense, as I say, to keep technically straight until he was ready to deal the final blow. The blow fell at dinner; and the old librarian had said he should never forget the very look of the lamp-shades and the decanters as the little lawyer, with a steady smile, proposed to the great landlord that they should halve the estate between them. The sequel, certainly, could not be overlooked; for the Duke, in dead silence, smashed a decanter on the man's bald head — as suddenly as I had seen him smash the glass, that day, in the orchard. It left a red triangular scar on the scalp; and "the lawyer's eyes altered; but not his smile."

He rose tottering to his feet, and struck back, as such men do strike.

"I am glad of that," he said, "for now I can take the whole estate. The law will give it me."


BLUE DRAGON INN
TEA GARDENS

"'YOUR GRACE,' I CRIED, 'TAKE OFF THAT WIG, OR I WILL KNOCK IT OFF.' I SPRANG AT HIM; I FORCED HIS HEAD BACK"

Exeter, it seems, was white as ashes; but his eyes still blazed.

"The law will give it you," he said, "but you will not take it. . . . Why not? Why, because it would be the crack of doom for me; and if you take it *I shall take off my wig.* . . . Why, you pitiful plucked fowl, any one can see your bare head. But no man shall see mine and live."

Well, you may say what you like, and make it mean what you like; but Mull swears it is the solemn fact that the lawyer, after shaking his knotted fists in the air for an instant, simply ran from the room, and never reappeared in the country-side. And since then Exeter has been feared more for a warlock even than for a landlord and a magistrate.

Now, Dr. Mull told his story with rather wild theatrical gestures, and with a passion I think at least partisan. I was quite conscious of the possibility that the whole was the extravagance of an old braggart and gossip; but, before I end this first half of my discoveries, I think it due to Dr. Mull to record that my first two inquiries have confirmed his story. I learnt from an old apothecary in the village that there was a bald man in evening dress, giving the name of Green, who came to him one night to have a three-cornered cut on his forehead plastered. And I learnt from the legal records and old newspapers that there was a lawsuit threatened, and begun at least, by one Green against the Duke of Exeter. . . .

Mr. Button of the *Daily Reformer* wrote some highly incongruous words across the top of the copy, made some highly mysterious marks down the side of it, and called to Miss Barlow in the same loud, monotonous voice:

"Take down a letter to Mr. Finn. 'Dear Finn: Your copy will do, but I have had to headline it a bit; and our public would never stand a Romanist priest in the story; you must keep your eye on the suburbs. I've altered him to Mr. Brown, a spiritualist. Yours, E. Button.'"

A day or two afterwards found the active and judicious editor examining, with blue eyes that seemed to grow rounder and rounder, the second instalment of Mr. Finn's tale of mysteries in high life. It began with the words:

I HAVE made an astounding discovery. I freely confess it is quite different from anything I expected to discover, and will give a much more practical shock to the public. I venture to say, without any vanity, that the words I now write will be read all over Europe, and certainly all over America and the Colonies. And yet, I heard all I have to tell before I left this same little wooden table in this same little wood of apple trees.

I owe it all to the small priest Brown. He is an extraordinary man.

The big librarian had left the table, perhaps ashamed of his long tongue, perhaps anxious about the storm in which his mysterious master had vanished; anyway, he betook himself heavily in the Duke's track through the trees. Father Brown had picked up one of the lemons and was eyeing it with an odd pleasure.

"What a lovely colour a lemon is!" he said. "There's one thing I don't like about the Duke's wig — the colour."

"I don't think I understand," I answered.

"I daresay he's got good reason to cover his ears like King Midas," went on the priest, with a cheerful simplicity that somehow seemed rather flippant, in the circumstances. "I can quite understand that it's nicer to cover them with hair than with brass plates or leather flaps. But, if he wants to use hair, why doesn't he make it look like hair? There never was hair of that colour in this world. It looks more like a sunset cloud coming through a wood. Why doesn't he conceal the family curse better, if he's really so ashamed of it? Shall I tell you? It's because he isn't ashamed of it. He's proud of it."

"It's an ugly wig to be proud of — and an ugly story," I said.

"Consider," replied this curious little man, "how you yourself really feel about such things. I don't suggest you're either more snobbish or more morbid than the rest of us; but don't you feel, in a vague way, that a genuine old family curse is rather a fine thing to have? Would you be ashamed — wouldn't you be a little proud — if the heir of the Glamis horror called you his friend, or if Byron's family had confided, to you only, the evil adventures of their race? Don't be too hard on the aristocrats themselves if their heads are as weak as ours would be; and they are snobs about their own sorrows."

"By Jove!" I cried, "and that's true enough. My own mother's family had a Banshee; and, now I come to think of it, it has comforted me in many a cold hour."

"And think," he went on, "of that stream of blood and poison that spurted from his thin lips the instant you so much as mentioned his ancestors. Why should he show every stranger over such a Chamber of Horrors, unless he is proud of it? He doesn't conceal his wig, he doesn't conceal his blood, he doesn't conceal his family curse, he doesn't conceal the family crimes — *but* ——"

The little man's voice changed so suddenly, he shut his hand so sharply, and his eyes so

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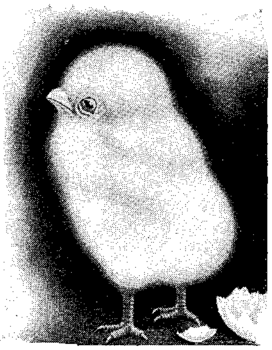

"Like the chick
That's newly hatched
Bon Ami
Has never scratched"

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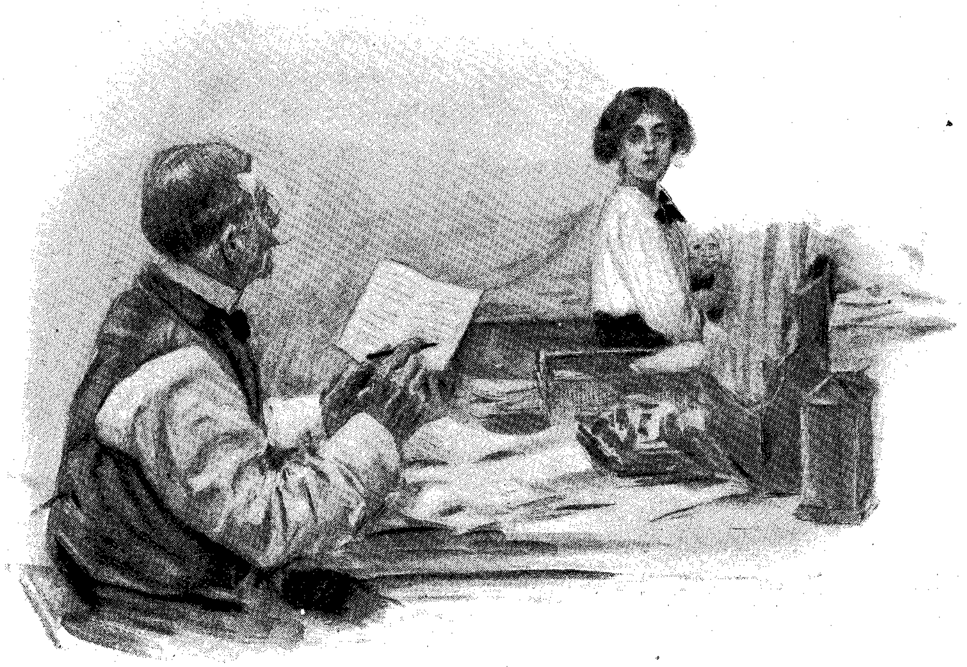
rapidly grew rounder and brighter, like a waking owl's, that it had all the abruptness of a small explosion on the table.

"But," he ended, *"he does really conceal his toilet."*

It somehow completed the thrill of my fanciful nerves that at that instant the Duke appeared again silently among the glimmering trees, with his soft foot and sunset-hued hair, coming round the corner of the house in company with his librarian. Before he came within ear-shot, Father Brown had added, quite composedly: "Why does he really hide the secret of what he does with the purple wig? Because it isn't the sort of secret we suppose."



"MISS BARLOW RATTLED DOWN THE ELABORATE EPISTLE AS IF IT WERE ALL ONE WORD"

The Duke came round the corner, and resumed his seat at the head of the table with all his native dignity. The embarrassment of the librarian left him hovering on his hind legs, like a huge bear. The Duke addressed the priest with great seriousness.

"Father Brown," he said, "Dr. Mull informs me that you have come here to make a request. I no longer profess an observance of the religion of my fathers; but for their sakes, and for the sake of the days when we met before, I am very willing to hear you. But I presume you would rather be heard in private."

Whatever I retain of the gentleman made me stand up. Whatever I have attained of the journalist made me stand still. Before this paralysis could pass, the priest had made a momentarily detaining motion. "If," he said, "your Grace will permit me my real petition, or if I retain any right to advise you, I would urge that as many people as possible should be present. All over this country I have found hundreds, even of my own faith and flock, whose imaginations are poisoned by the spell which I implore you to break. I wish we could have all Devonshire here to see you do it."

"To see me do what?" asked the Duke, arching his eyebrows.

"To see you take off your wig," said Father Brown.

The Duke's face did not move; but he looked at his petitioner with a glassy stare which was the most awful expression I have ever seen on a human face. I could see the librarian's great legs wavering under him like the shadows of stems in a pool; and I could not banish from my own brain the fancy that the trees all around us were filling softly, in the silence, with devils instead of birds.

"I spare you," said the Duke, in a voice of inhuman pity. "I refuse. If I gave you the faintest hint of the load of horror I have to bear alone, you *would* lie shrieking at these feet of mine and begging to know no more. I will spare you the hint. You shall not spell the first letter of what is written on the altar of the Unknown God."

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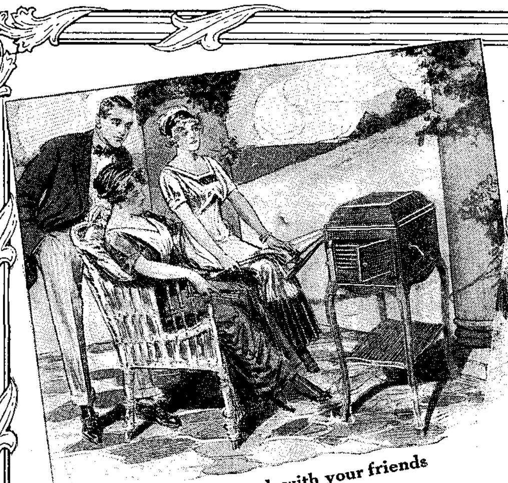
- Montessori
- Jessie Willcox Smith
- Sylvia Pankhurst
- Julian Street
- J. Montgomery Flagg
- C. D. Gibson
- Maravene Thompson
- Samuel Merwin
- E. M. Woolley
- Helen Green Van Campen
- Ward Muir
- George Kibbe Turner
- Everett Shinn

THE SALAMANDER

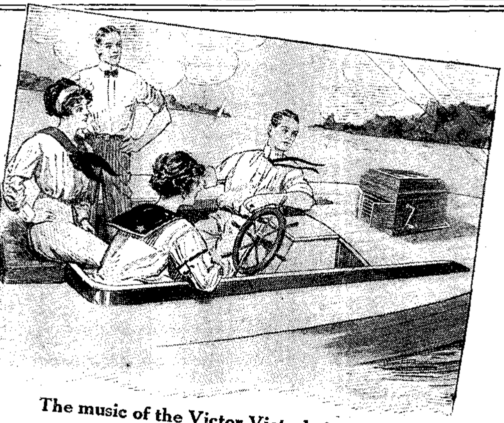
The Story of a Girl Who Went Through Fire

This is the title of the newest and biggest novel of Owen Johnson, author of "Stover at Yale." Look for the introductory chapter next month.

THE EDITOR OF McCLURE'S



On the porch with your friends and a Victor-Victrola

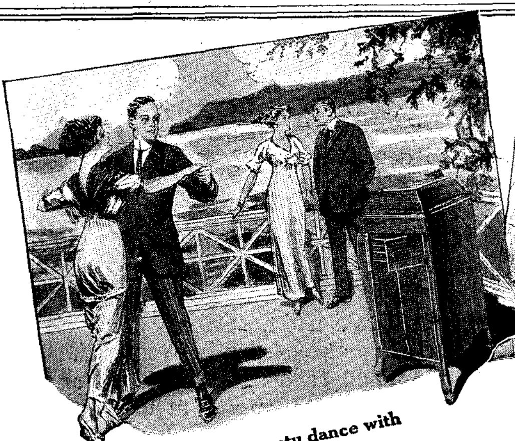


The music of the Victor-Victrola is particularly enjoyable on the water

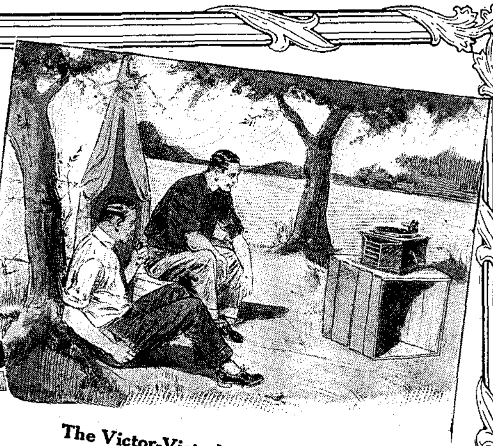
Take a Victrola you go away

Whether you go to the country, mountains, or seashore for the summer, or just camp out for a week or so, you'll be glad of the companionship of the Victrola.

This wonderful instrument enables you to take with you wherever you go the most celebrated bands, the greatest opera artists, the most famous instrumentalists, and the cleverest comedians—to play and sing for you at your leisure, to provide music for your dances, to make your vacation thoroughly enjoyable.



An impromptu dance with a Victor-Victrola



The Victor-Victrola is an important part of the camping outfit

with you when this summer

And even if you don't go away, a Victrola will entertain you and give you a delightful "vacation" right at home.

You can buy a Victrola for $15, $25, $40, $50, $75, $100, $150, $200.

Any Victor dealer in any city in the world will gladly play your favorite music and demonstrate the Victrola to you.

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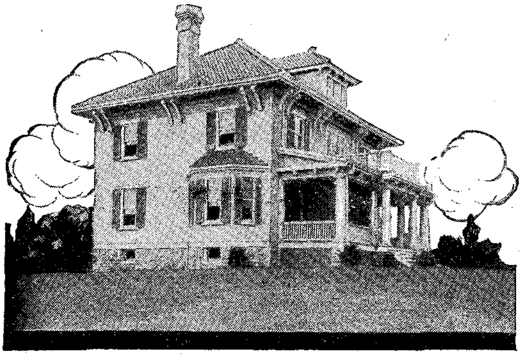
Berliner Gramophone Co., Montreal, Canadian Distributors

Always use Victor Machines with Victor Records and Victor Needles—*the combination.* There is no other way to get the unequaled Victor tone.

Victor Steel Needles, 5 cents per 100
Victor Fibre Needles, 50 cents per 100 (can be repointed and used eight times)
New Victor Records are on sale at all dealers on the 28th of each month

Victor

"HIS MASTERS VOICE"



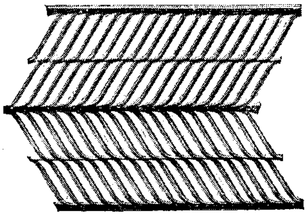
You can just as well have a protected home.

Protected from exterior fire—Protected from the ravages of storms—Protected from decay—Protected from repair bills—if you build it of the popular stucco with Herringbone Metal Lath. Its first cost will be hardly more than that of an inflammable wooden house and its final cost a great deal less.

Artistic and Economical

No paint is required for the attractive cement plaster exterior of a stucco house; its walls are always free from cracks and seams. A stucco house grows handsomer, stronger and more stone-like with age.

Insurance premiums and repair bills are small items to the owner of a Herringbone House.



Send for illustrated booklet, telling all about this new type of home construction.

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Youngstown
Ohio

Trade Mark

"I know the Unknown God," said the little priest, with an unconscious grandeur of certitude that stood up like a granite tower. "I know his name. It is Satan. The true God was made flesh, and dwelt among us. And I say to you, wherever you find men ruled merely by mystery, it is the mystery of iniquity. If the devil tells you something too fearful to look at, look at it. If he says something too terrible to hear, hear it. If you think some truth unbearable, bear it. I entreat your Grace to end this nightmare now and here, at this table."

"If I did," said the Duke, in a low voice, "you, and all you believe, and all by which alone you live, would be the first to shrivel and perish. You would have an instant to know the great Nothing before you died."

"The cross of Christ be between me and harm," said Father Brown. "Take off your wig."

I WAS leaning over the table in ungovernable excitement, listening to this extraordinary duel, when half a thought came into my head. "Your Grace," I cried, "I call your bluff. Take off that wig, or I will knock it off."

I suppose I can be prosecuted for assault, but I am very glad I did it. When he said, in the same voice of stone, "I refuse," I simply sprang on him. For three long instants he strained against me as if he had all hell to help him; but I forced back his head until the hairy cap fell off it. I admit that, while wrestling, I shut my eyes as it fell.

I was awakened by a cry from Mull, who was also, by this time, at the Duke's side. His head and mine were both bending over the bald head of the wigless Duke. Then the silence was snapped by the librarian exclaiming:

"What can it mean? Why, the man had nothing to hide. His ears are just like everybody else's."

"Yes," said Father Brown; "that is what he had to hide."

The priest walked straight up to him, but, strangely enough, did not even glance at his ears. He stared, with an almost comical seriousness, at his bald forehead, and pointed to a three-cornered cicatrice, long healed, but still discernible.

"Mr. Green, I think," he said politely, "and he did get the whole estate, after all."

AND now let me tell the readers of the *Daily Reformer* what I think the most remarkable thing in the whole affair. This transformation scene, which will seem to you as wild and purple as a Persian fairy tale, has been (except for my technical assault) strictly legal and constitu-

Post Toasties

Ready When You Stop

A food immediately ready for use. Add a little cream (or milk) and a sprinkle of sugar.

It is put up in double sealed packages—impossible of contamination from dust or moisture.

Post Toasties

the deliciously toasted bits of wafer-like corn are the food for picnics, auto tours and any kind of trips—and for the home.

Its convenience does away with a lot of bother to whoever prepares the meals.

The delightful flavor of Post Toasties makes new friends every day—and

"The Memory Lingers"

Postum Cereal Company, Limited
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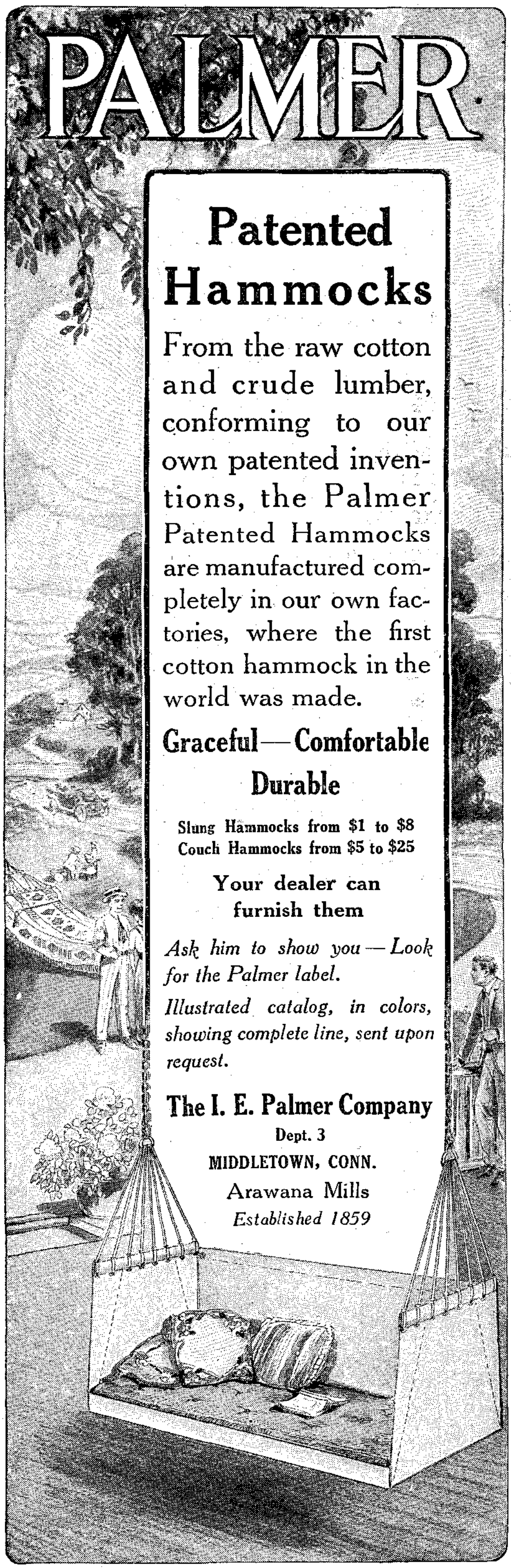
Windsor, Ontario, Canada.



PALMER

Patented Hammocks

From the raw cotton and crude lumber, conforming to our own patented inventions, the Palmer Patented Hammocks are manufactured completely in our own factories, where the first cotton hammock in the world was made.

Graceful — Comfortable Durable

Slung Hammocks from $1 to $8
Couch Hammocks from $5 to $25

Your dealer can furnish them

Ask him to show you — Look for the Palmer label.

Illustrated catalog, in colors, showing complete line, sent upon request.

The I. E. Palmer Company
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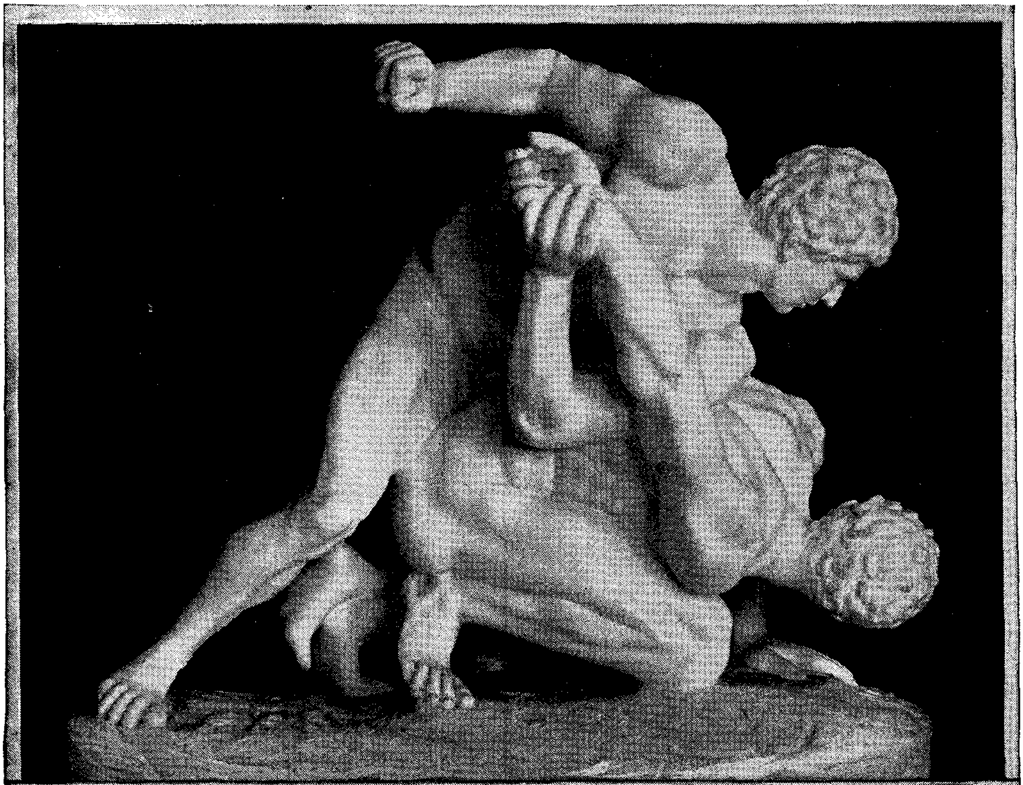
MIDDLETOWN, CONN.
Arawana Mills
Established 1859

tional from its first beginnings. This man with the odd scar and the ordinary ears is not an impostor. Though, in one sense, he wears another man's wig and claims another man's ear, he has not stolen another man's coronet. He really is the one and only Duke of Exeter. What happened was this: The old Duke really had a slight malformation of the ear, which really was more or less hereditary. He really was morbid about it; and it is likely enough that he did invoke it as a kind of curse in the violent scene (which undoubtedly happened) in which he struck Green with the decanter. But the contest ended very differently. Green pressed his claim and got the estates; the dispossessed nobleman shot himself, and died without issue. After a decent interval the beautiful English Government revived the "extinct" peerage of Exeter, and bestowed it, as is usual, on the most important person — the person who had got the property. This man used the old feudal fables; probably, in his snobbish soul, really envied and admired them. So that thousands of poor English people trembled before a mysterious chieftain with an ancient destiny and a diadem of evil stars — when they were really trembling before a gutter-snipe who was a pettifogger and a pawnbroker not twenty years ago. I think it very typical of the real case against our aristocracy as it is, and as it will be till God sends us braver men. . . .

MR. BUTTON put down the manuscript, and called out with unusual sharpness: "Miss Barlow, please take down a letter to Mr. Finn. 'Dear Finn: You must be mad. We can't touch this. I wanted vampires and the bad old days and aristocracy hand in hand with superstition. They like that. But you must know the Exeters would never forgive this. And what would our people say then, I should like to know? Why, Sir Simon is one of Exeter's greatest pals; and it would ruin that cousin of the Eyres that's standing for us at Bradford. Besides, old Soapsuds was sick enough at not getting his peerage last year; he'd sack me by wire if I lost him it with such lunacy as this. And what about Duffey? He's doing us some rattling articles on "The Heel of the Norman." And how can he write about Normans, if the man's only a solicitor? Do be reasonable. Yours, E. Button.' "

As Miss Barlow rattled away cheerfully, he crumpled up the copy and tossed it into the waste-paper basket; but not before he had, automatically and by mere force of habit, altered the word "God" to the word "circumstances."



MARBLE GROUP IN POSTUM OFFICES

In Olden Times

The Greek and Roman athletes trained on simple, wholesome foods, made largely from the field grains—*producing* and *maintaining* the old-world ideals of vigorous manhood.

These grains grow today as they did then.

Grape-Nuts

FOOD

—made of Wheat and Barley—contains the body- and brain-building elements stored in the grains by Nature, and is scientifically prepared for easy digestion.

One cannot find better food than Grape-Nuts!

"There's A Reason"

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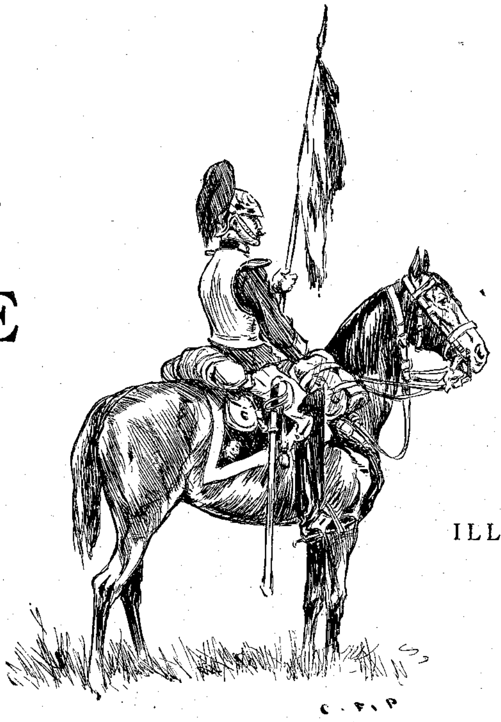
THE EMPTY SADDLE

BY
DONAL
HAMILTON
HAINES

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
C. F. PETERS



THE infantry laughed at them — and the laughter of infantry is never polite and not always good natured. In the minds of the infantry there was good ground for laughter. They themselves wore very plain brown uniforms which were very dirty, while these "feather-bed soldiers," as they had nicknamed the cavalry, wore white trousers, shiny top-boots, scarlet jackets, uncomfortable helmets, and glittering cuirasses, which could be seen two miles away on a cloudy day and five miles in the sunlight.

But the last straw was that the cavalrymen persisted in carrying about with them a silken standard, so tattered and worn that it had to be kept in an oilcloth cover. The infantry knew better than to carry flags. They flaunted one in their first engagement — and it so happened that their country's flag was a rather gay affair with a predominance of red in the color-scheme. Six men, two of them good shots, were killed trying to carry the flag, and the infantry gave it up as unwise.

The infantry officers, being wise in the esoteric question of traditions, understood the cavalry, and rather venerated them because their regiment was four hundred years old and had been founded by a prince who wore chain-armor. But this was all beyond the frowning comprehension of the rank and file, who could not understand why men should go into action with their bodies incased in steel plates (which would not stop bullets at six hundred yards) and helmets that weighed four pounds apiece, with the mercury standing at ninety in the shade, just because the regiment had always done that.

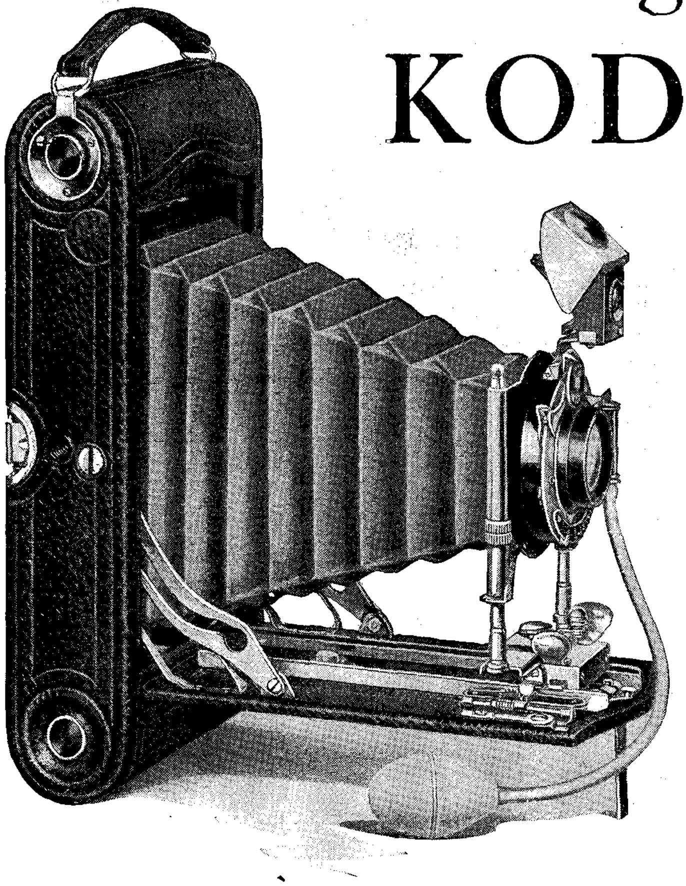
"Then why," demanded an infantry corporal, who looked like a tramp, "don't them swells carry bows an' arrers, and talk Latin, if they're aimin' to be behind the times?"

THE regiment was indeed very much of a white elephant to the anxious general who commanded the expedition. His eight sound-footed, strong-shooting infantry regiments and his three dingy, accurate field-batteries were very useful — but the splendid cavalry were a different matter. He was perfectly willing to admit that they looked very well clattering through paved streets between yelling crowds of people, but they did not blend with an environment of rugged, rocky hills, treeless plains, and an enemy whose eyesight was peculiarly good.

"And it hurts my sense of proportion to send 'em off on dinky scouting trips," the General confessed to his chief of staff. "It's like setting a man in evening clothes to scrubbing floors!"

But the cuirassiers were a part of the army's strength, and in the war office, where many things are done with a pencil and paper, they were nailed securely on to the column that needed cavalry. The cuirassiers were un-

3A Folding Pocket KODAK



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Price,
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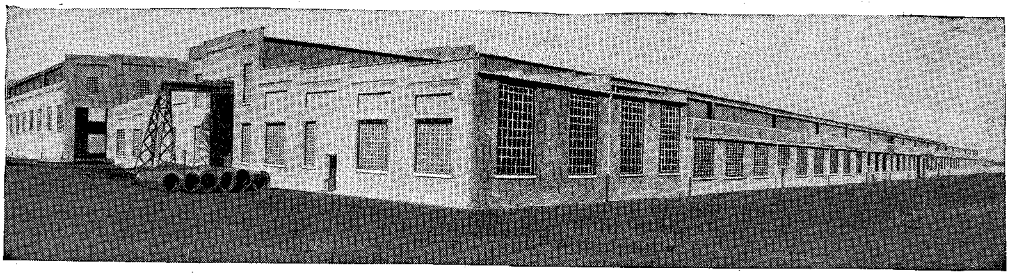
Barrett Specification Roofs

Part of the Ford Plate Glass Works, Rossford, Ohio. Plant is covered with 420,000 Sq. Ft. of Barrett Specification Roofs.

The DeVore-McGormley Company, Engineers.



Last Longest—Cost Least

THE proper unit in comparing the values of roofings is the cost-per-foot-per-year-of-service.

To have a low unit cost a roofing must be—
1st. Inexpensive to build,
2d. Inexpensive to maintain, and
3d. Of great durability.

Barrett Specification Roofs are—
1st. The *least* expensive of all permanent roofs to build,
2d. They cost *nothing* to maintain, and
3d. They usually last, without repairs or leaks, *20 years* or over.

The net result of these three factors is a unit cost of about ¼c. per foot per year of service. This is a lower unit cost than ever attained by any other class of roofing.

Accordingly, Barrett Specification Roofs are in almost universal use on buildings such as illustrated herewith, where unit costs are intelligently studied.

Copy of the Barrett Specification with tracing ready for incorporation in your building plans sent free on request. Address nearest office.

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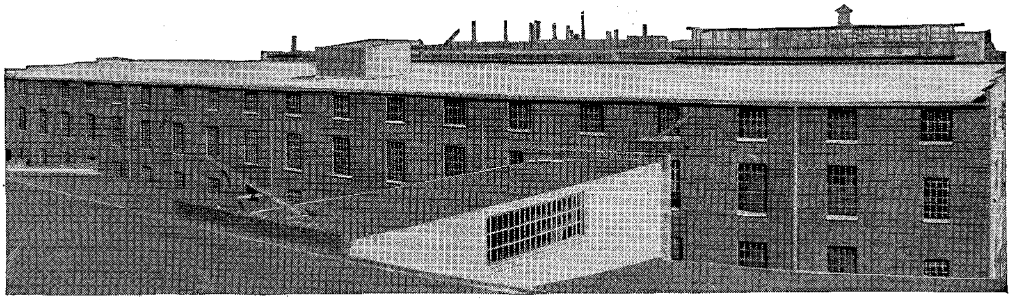
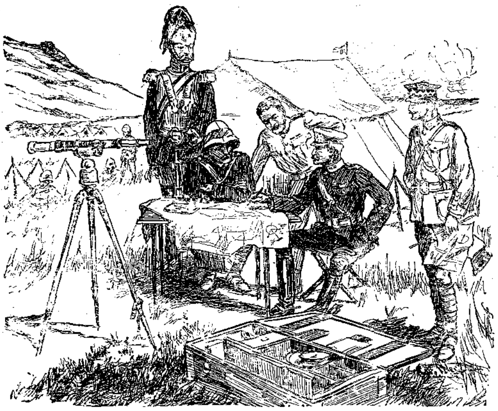
THE PATERSON MFG. CO., Limited:—Montreal Toronto Winnipeg Vancouver St. John, N. B. Halifax, N. S. Sydney, N. S.



doubtedly cavalry, reasoned the war office, inasmuch as they unquestionably rode horses, and more than this the war office did not need to know.

So the cuirassiers went through the forms of doing the work of ordinary cavalry — and were kept discreetly hidden at the tail of the long column, where they chafed greatly at their inactivity. Once they had a chance — and it proved their complete undoing in the eyes of the infantry. A thick cloud of the enemy's light horse had been hanging on to the column's flank with the persistency of a swarm of gnats, and the cuirassiers were sent to brush them away. Their charge was magnificent, and was visible, in the glare of sunlight, for about eight miles. The mobile horsemen of the enemy simply ran when the cuirassiers charged, peppering away with their carbines, and never letting the thundering heavy squadrons get close enough for saber-play. The cuirassiers came back looking ponderously foolish, and their Colonel (on a white horse, because the head of the regiment always rode one) was seen to blush beneath his tan.



"'THEY WON'T EXPECT US FOR TWO DAYS,' SAID THE GENERAL. 'WE'LL MARCH TO-NIGHT AND FALL ON THEM IN THE MORNING'"

It was after this fiasco that the cuirassiers invaded the camp of one of the infantry regiments because one of the subalterns in the foot had openly and insultingly suggested that the only thing that could possibly be done with the cavalry was to use them as heliographs.

The column was pushing across country to the relief of a beleaguered town fifty miles inland. Because of the nature of the country, the untrustworthiness of guides, and the guileless inaccuracy of the maps, the column had to feel its way with the utmost caution. Furthermore, the elusive enemy kept persistently just out of touch with the advance-guard. Three

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CUTICURA SOAP

And Cuticura Ointment do so much to clear the skin of sunburn, heat rashes, itchings, irritations, chafings, pimples, redness and roughness, and do it so quickly and economically as to be indispensable. They are equally valuable for all purposes of the toilet, bath and nursery.

Cuticura Soap and Cuticura Ointment are sold throughout the world. Send post-card to nearest depot for free sample of each with 32-page book: Newbery, 27, Charterhouse Sq., London; R. Towns & Co., Sydney, N. S. W.; Lennon, Ltd., Cape Town; Muller, Maclean & Co., Calcutta and Bombay; Potter Drug & Chem. Corp., Boston, U. S. A.

☞Men who shave and shampoo with Cuticura Soap will find it best for skin and scalp.

days after the cavalry episode, the army was given a day's rest in preparation for a forced march. The General and his staff bent their heads over maps and pricked out with their pencils the things to be done. Twenty-five miles ahead of them was a river, a broad, deep river with stony, steep hills along both banks. There were two fords a scant three miles apart, and by these the army would have to cross. Of course, it was at the river that the enemy would make his stand. The enemy was reported to be about three thousand strong.

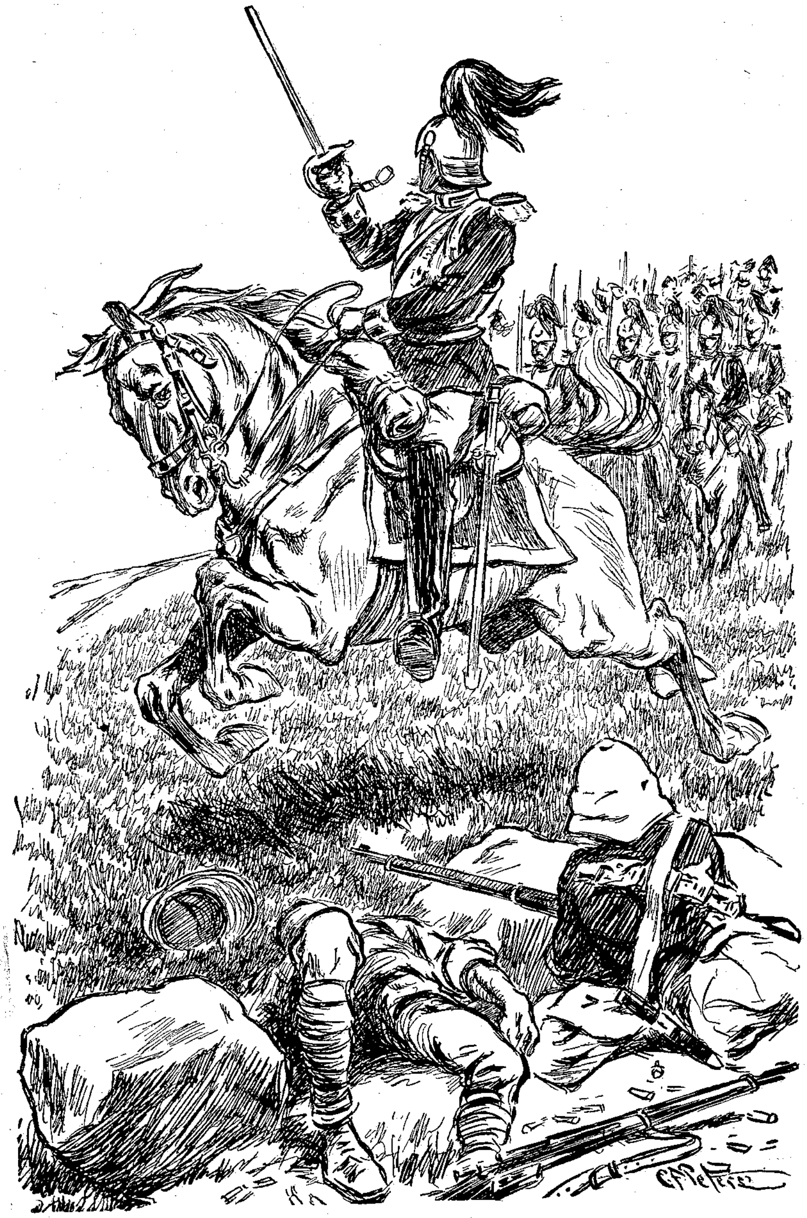
"They won't expect us for two days," explained the General. "So we'll march the whole distance to-night, and fall on them in the morning."

So the thing was planned. Three regiments were to attack the upper ford, three regiments the lower, and the other two regiments, with the cavalry, were to form a supporting column midway between the two.

"I'm afraid your men will have to wait on the infantry, Colonel," the General said to the cuirassier, with a deprecatory smile.

The Colonel, a big blond man with a big blond mustache, pulled the latter and said quietly: "Very well, sir. But my horse and the other horses could swim the river, where your infantry can't."

The twenty-five mile sprint started in the pitch-darkness of the hot night. The wheels of the artillery were carefully greased, and the clanking cavalry was put well out on the flank, where the racket of their advance would be swallowed up in the darkness. It was the sort of march to test the mettle of the infantry to the last ounce. The sky was moonless, and the stars glared smoky and hot like gasolene flares. The thick dust rose in choking clouds, and the hot air pressed down like something solid, unstirred by the faintest puff of wind. The infantry moved unwisely in dense quarter column formation, which only increased the dust and heat. The skirmishers out in front fared better — but it was bad for them. By

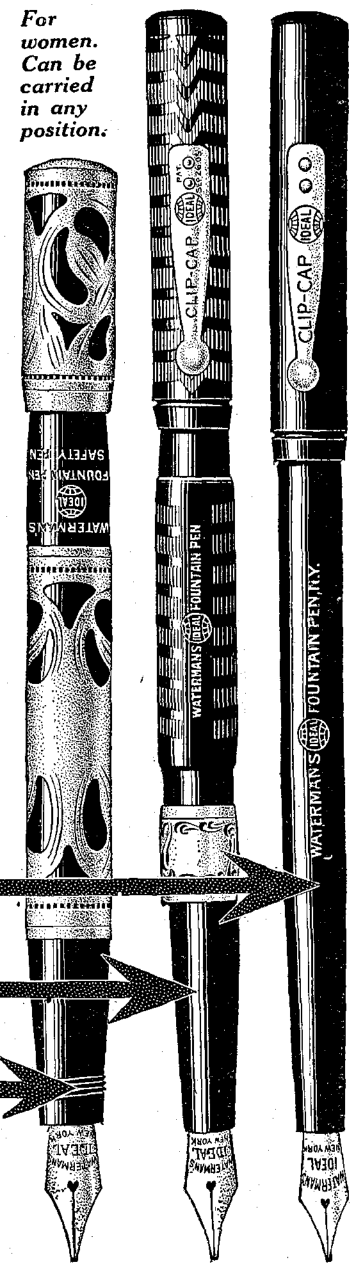


"THEY SWEPT DOWN TO THE EDGE OF THE STREAM IN A GLORIOUS, SWEEPING CURVE OF WHITE, SCARLET, AND FLASHING METAL"

Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen

For Your Summer Writing

THE pen for the season of outdoor writing; the sending of postcards from wherever you happen to be, the social note and the home letter. One Waterman's Ideal makes the whole world your writing table. It is ready to write when you are; it is just the kind of pen you can depend upon when you are miles away from an inkwell. Your hand can be suited exactly in Waterman's Ideals; they are made with extreme accuracy and to last. A permanent investment.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These are the three standard types in different styles of mounting. Your dealer will show and explain each type to you, or folder will be sent upon request. Be sure to buy the genuine, stamped Waterman's Ideal—it distinguishes the best pen ideas and patents and the highest quality ever joined in any one writing implement.

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Ster. Silver	Self-Filling	Plain
$5.50	$3.75	$2.75
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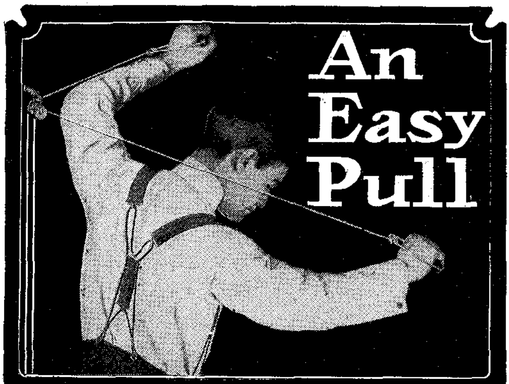

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It is perfectly suited for **all** Toilet and Nursery purposes. It covers instantly and completely and leaves no "powdered look". Soothing, absorbent, antiseptic and so **refreshing.** You will enjoy the true Rose fragrance.

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James S. Kirk & Co.

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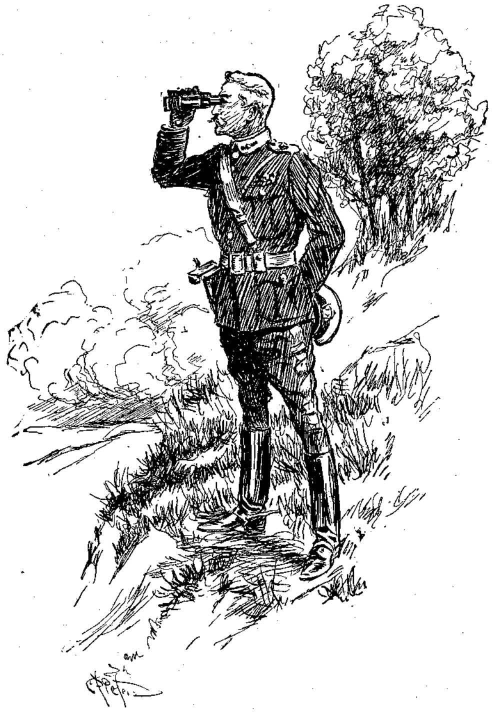
JAMES S. KIRK & CO.
327 E. Michigan Street
CHICAGO, U. S. A.

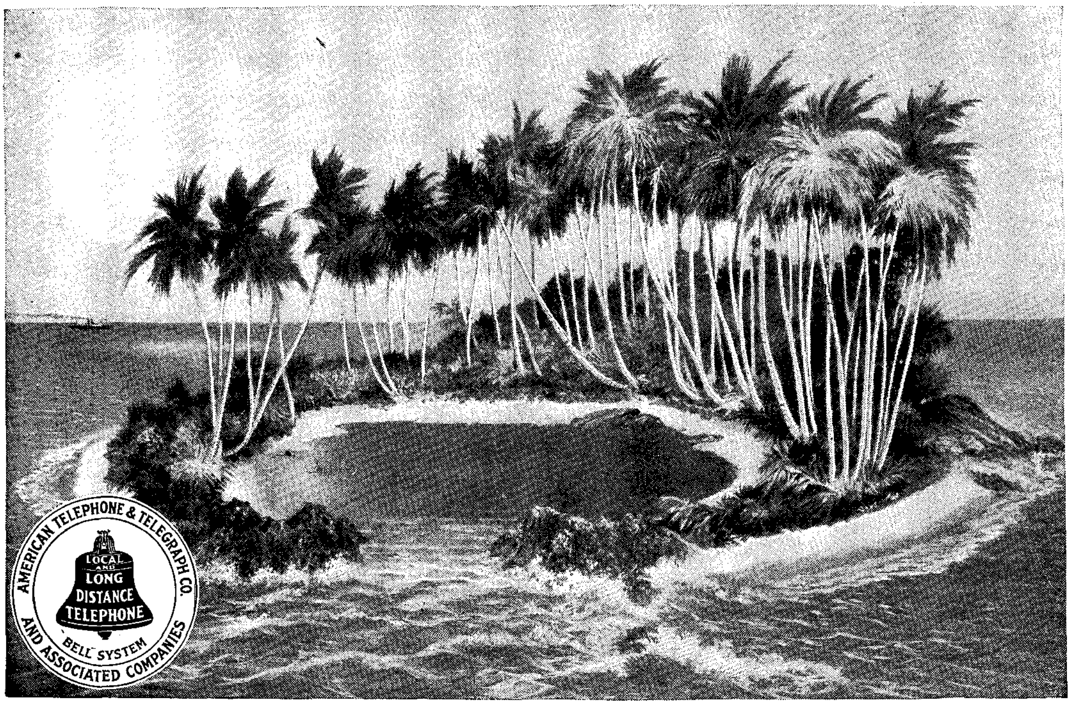
midnight the army had moved twelve miles, and the stragglers dotted the line of march. At three o'clock in the morning, with the first suggestions of dawn in the sky, the columns had five hot miles still to march, and the men were hollow-eyed, drawn, and dog-tired.

The column split into three divisions, and the men stumbled drowsily through the darkness toward their assigned positions. From out on the flank, the cavalry came pounding in and attached itself to the central column. The batteries, their axles creaking in spite of the thick coatings of grease, crept on toward the front on the heels of the skirmishers.

In the faint light, the swell of the ground toward the river began to show black against the paling sky. The column formations dissolved into open order, and the movement became slower. The central column pushed ahead, the shining mass of the cavalry following the dusty infantry. The white charger of the Colonel stood out sharply in the half-light. The first hesitating shots of the skirmishers rang out, and the two attacking columns began to move toward the fords, while the supporting column, spread out fanwise, swarmed toward the bank of the river.



"THE GENERAL STOOD ON A LITTLE HILLOCK AND WATCHED THROUGH HIS BINOCULARS. EVERYTHING WAS WORKING BEAUTIFULLY"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Coral Builders and the Bell System

In the depths of tropical seas the coral polyps are at work. They are nourished by the ocean, and they grow and multiply because they cannot help it.

Finally a coral island emerges from the ocean. It collects sand and seeds, until it becomes a fit home for birds, beasts and men.

In the same way the telephone system has grown, gradually at first, but steadily and irresistibly. It could not stop growing. To stop would mean disaster.

The Bell System, starting with a few scattered exchanges, was carried forward by an increasing public demand.

Each new connection disclosed a need for other new connections, and millions of dollars had to be poured into the business to provide the 7,500,000 telephones now connected.

And the end is not yet, for the growth of the Bell System is still irresistible, because the needs of the people will not be satisfied except by universal communication. The system is large because the country is large.

AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY

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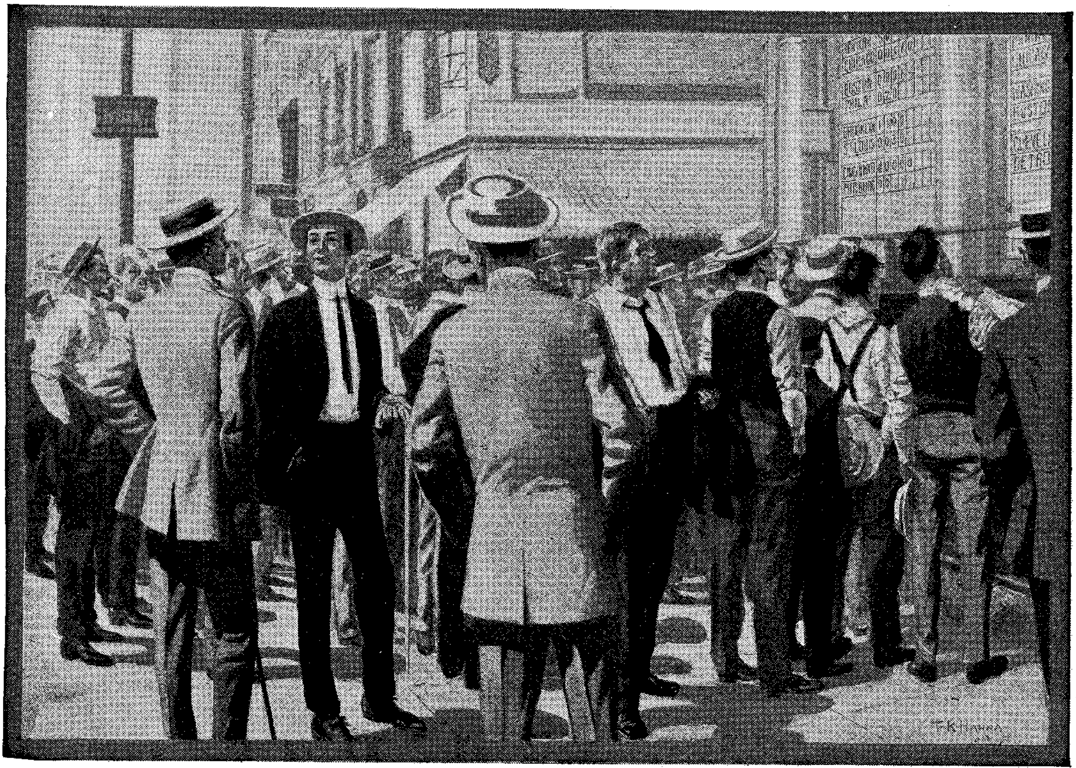

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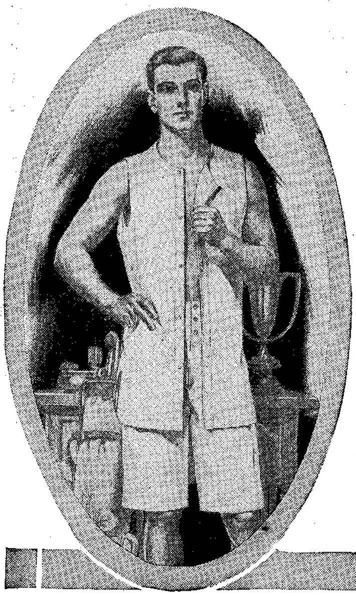

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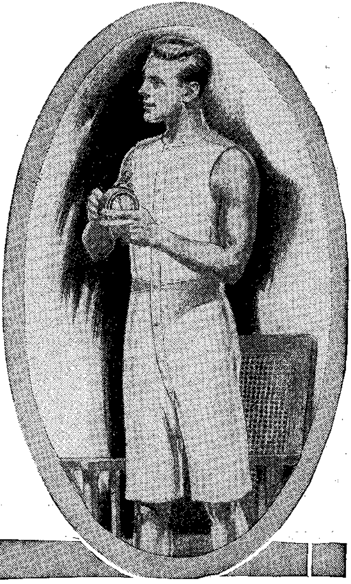

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The General stood on a little hillock a mile back of the river and watched through his binoculars. Everything was working beautifully — save that his infantrymen looked and acted like sleepy children. His batteries were in position, his cavalry safely hidden behind a protecting roll of ground, his infantry moving toward the fords. In the growing light, the shaggy hills on the other bank of the stream lowered dangerously; but the General was confident of his troops. If only they were not so tired! He wondered if the forced march had really been wise.

IT was four o'clock when the three batteries whipped a dozen shells across the river at the silent hills — but the hills remained silent. The artillerymen rubbed their dust-caked eyes and looked again. Surely those were gun-positions over there, showing light against the neutral-tinted background of rock-ribbed earth! One gun after another, the batteries barked into action, and the General watched the graceful curve of the shells with approval. He glanced at his watch; in fifteen minutes his columns would be at the fords. Was the crossing to be bloodless, after all?

With measured volleys, the supporting column in the center flayed the crests across the river without rousing an answering shot. Yet they knew the enemy was there! The heads of the attacking columns showed near the fords — and the hills across the river came to life!

As the awful volume of fire burst into the air, the line of the General's mouth trembled, and then set in a line which showed the teeth of his upper jaw. After the first crash, the Mausers on the other shore purred into a steady roar, through which came the grinding crackle of the Maxims and the dull, thudding reports of the guns.

THE ranks of the supporting column withered under the sweeping sheets of lead, and the heads of the attacking columns simply vanished. Around the guns of the batteries which had been busily shelling the silent hills a few minutes before, the brown figures of the gunners lay in heaps, and the battery horses sprawled and struggled on the ground, shot down in the traces. The General's hands closed into fists in which the drawn cords stood out painfully white. His infantry would go through; it was terrible, but they would go through somehow — if only they were not so tired!

Along the ragged front of the supporting column, men crawled into the shelter of rocks to escape the withering fire, and their weapons slipped from their lax fingers. They went to

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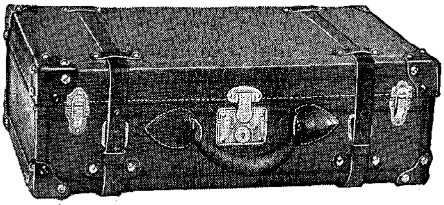

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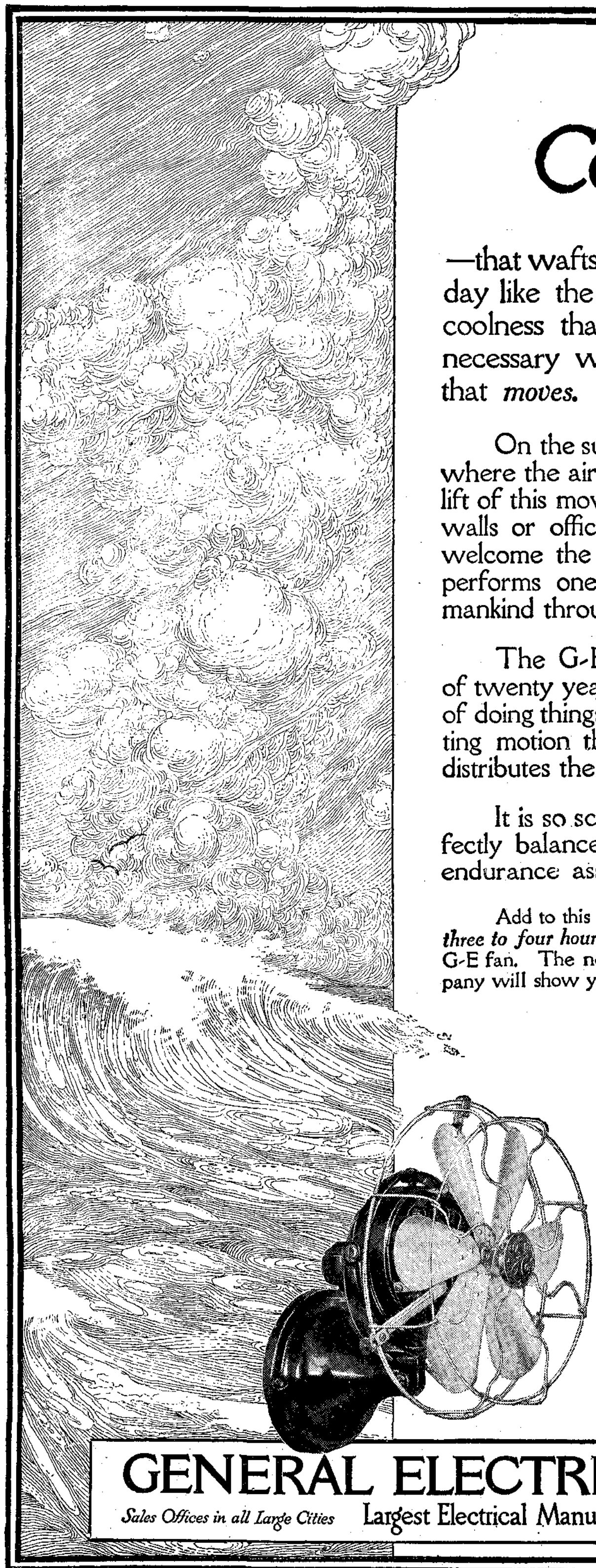

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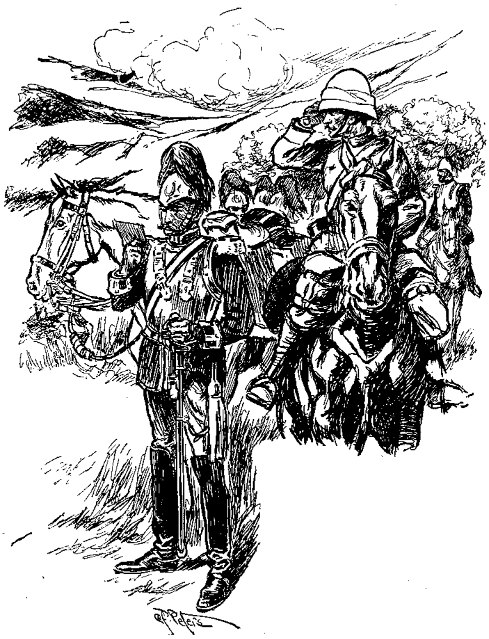
sleep with the bullets whistling overhead and the heads of the two attacking columns crumbling to pieces. At the fords, the water of the river was churned into little wavelets by the hissing bullets until it looked as if the surface were being lashed by a hail-storm. The noisy batteries fell silent, the gunners crawling into gullies behind the tail-pieces of their guns — anywhere to escape the merciless pelting of missiles in which neither man nor beast could hold up his head and live.



"THE BIG COLONEL READ THE SHEET OF PAPER EAGERLY"

From his hill-top the General saw his guns crippled, his infantry wilting in the face of an impossible task. From the corner of his eye he saw the first shafts of sunlight glittering on the hidden cuirassiers — and on the Colonel's white horse. The General scribbled feverishly on a sheet of paper, and an aide galloped madly toward the horsemen. The big Colonel, standing at the head of his white horse, took the sheet of paper eagerly.

"Swim the river above the upper ford and get into the enemy's rear," he read.

Beyond the upper ford, the ground on the enemy's side of the river sloped away in broad, open stretches; and toward this the massive squadrons moved. Keeping always a rising bit of ground between themselves and the enemy, they swept on across the rear of their own army, past the upper ford where the infantry were grudgingly giving ground, and so, in a

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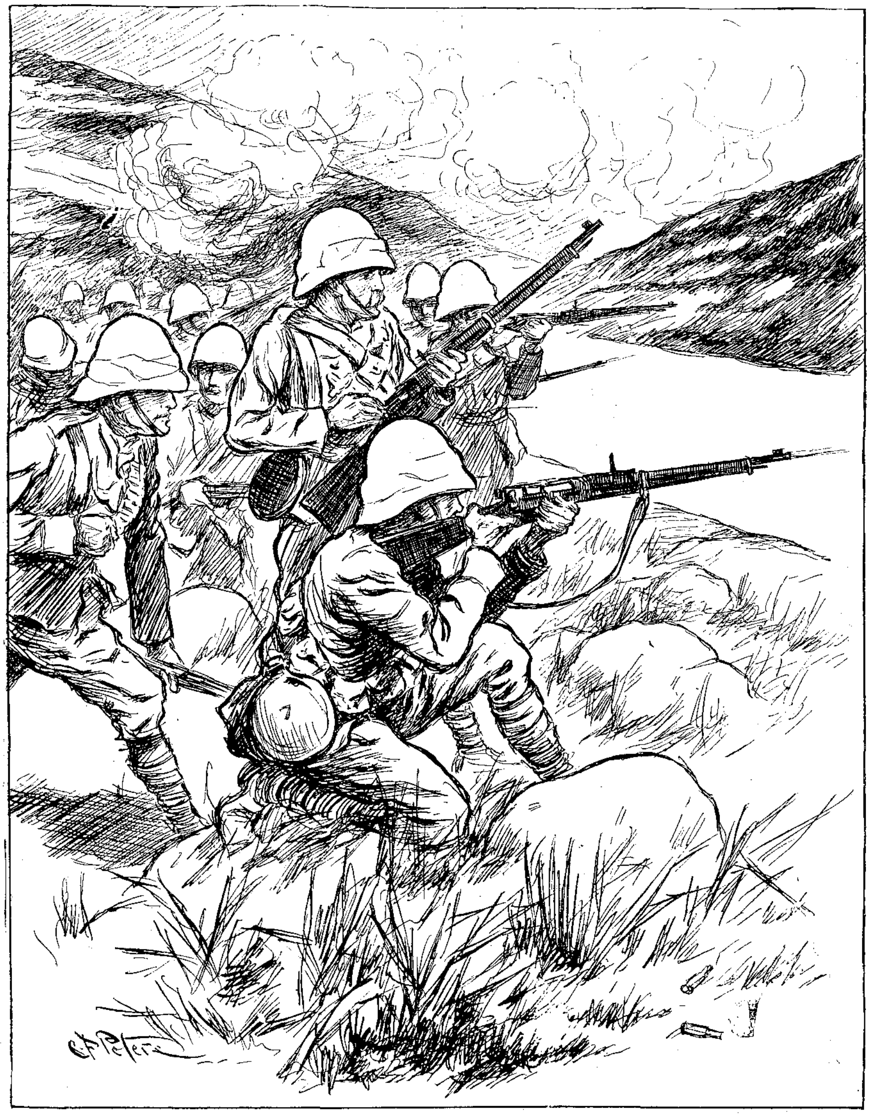
glorious, sweeping curve of white, scarlet, and flashing metal, down to the edge of the stream.

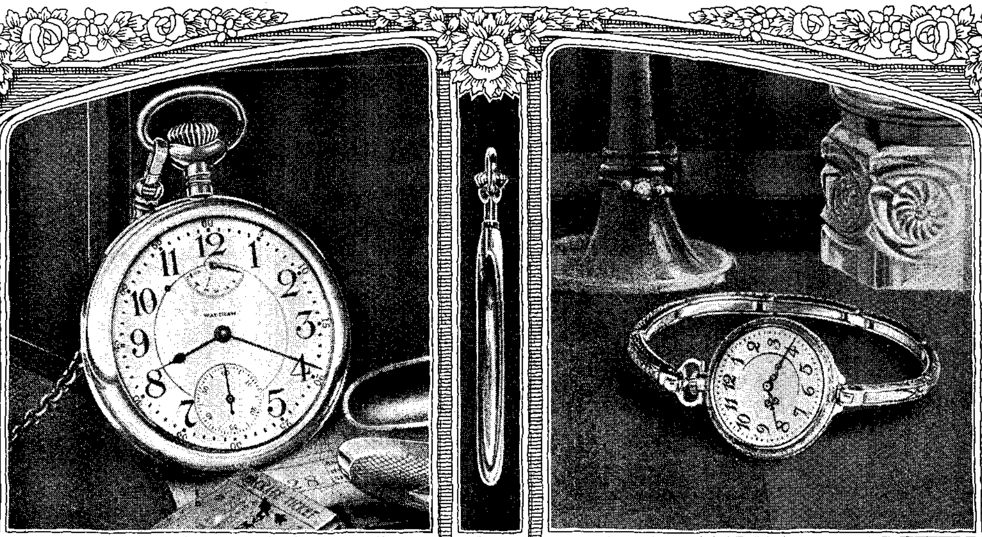
THE enemy saw them — saw them as the first white churnings of water splashed up from the hoofs of the Colonel's horse. The General saw them, standing white-lipped, with his clenched hands behind his back — saw line after line of bright helmets go into the river, and line after line follow them down the bank. He could hear the change in the sound of firing as the enemy swung Maxim and field-gun to meet this unexpected move, and through his glasses he could see the bullets cut the water about the struggling horsemen. He looked away, but he was of the school where traditions meant something.

"They'll do it!" he muttered thickly, to himself. "They've charged for four centuries — and they've followed the Colonel's white horse through the enemy's lines every time!"



"ACROSS THE RIVER, THE BLEEDING INFANTRY WIPED THE GRIME AND DUST FROM THEIR FACES AND GRIPPED THEIR RIFLES"

It was not the full regiment that scrambled to the shore, and the horsemen who did emerge from the water were drenched, beaten-looking men; yet the massive lines formed behind the dripping white horse, and the ground shook under the hoofs of eight hundred charging men.



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There were six hundred yards of open ground between the horsemen and the enemy's flank. There were three hundred rifles and two Maxim guns trained on them before they had ridden a third of the distance — and the roar of their falling was as the thunder of their charge. The huge, big-boned horses crashed to the ground as heroic equestrian figures fall; the six-foot troopers, with their steel breastplates and helmets, clanged from the saddles to the hard earth like falling trees. The Mauser bullets drilled neat round holes through the steel cuirasses as easily as they bored through the brown khaki shirts of the infantry.

Great gaps were ripped in the glittering front as the shells exploded; but the cuirassiers had always ridden boot to boot, and they filled the yawning holes as the holes came. And, always the prescribed distance ahead of the foremost rank, his long-bladed saber at an angle of parade-ground perfection, his body slightly turned so that he partially faced his men, the Colonel sat his white horse.

THREE hundred yards from the spitting trenches, a nickel-jacketed bullet caught the Colonel squarely in the forehead, and he lurched from the saddle. A hoarse cry went up from the thundering regiment, and the white horse plunged wildly, one of his rider's feet still in the stirrup. The trenches broke into yells, and their fire swelled louder. The cuirassiers slowed; their long lines wavered, hesitated, and broke.

From the other side of the river, the infantry, struggling vainly under the pitiless mauling of the enemy's fire, saw the charge through the smoke of the guns — saw the Colonel's fall, and groaned when the splendid squadrons broke. The sweat, pouring down the General's face, felt cold as he wiped it away with a hand that trembled.

"They're gone!" he muttered brokenly. "And he's gone with them!" he added; for he had known the big blond Colonel, and loved him as the men did.

Stung by the fire which pelted their backs as unrelentingly as it had their faces, the broken masses of the cavalry rolled back over the ground already heaped with their dead. Suddenly, from the scattered fringe of horsemen cloaking the rear of the fleeing cloud, broke the big white stallion, the heavy empty saddle showing pitifully against his white flank. An instant he stood, trembling; then his head went up, his mane shook out, and he started back toward the hostile trenches.

Across the river, the infantry gasped; the gunners stuck their heads from gullies and

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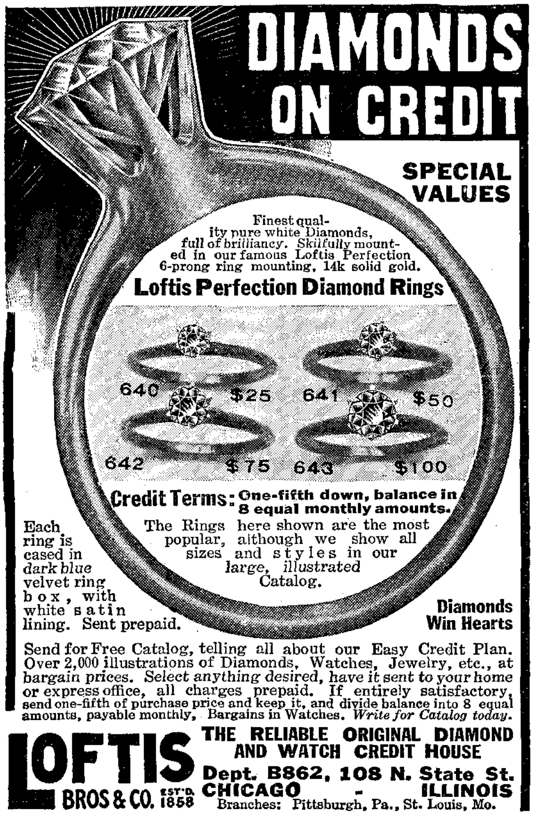
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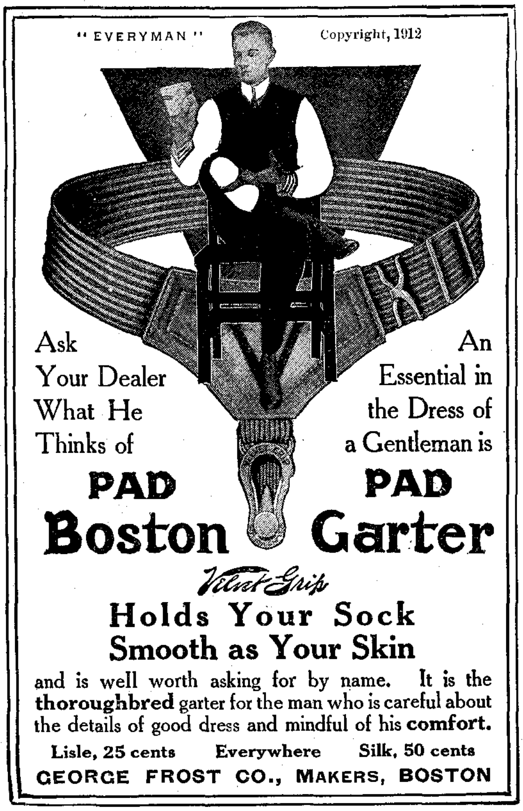
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cheered; the bleeding, cowering infantry wiped the grime and dust from their faces and gripped their rifles. Something seemed to catch in the General's throat, and something streamed down his cheek that was not sweat.

THE white horse had gone twenty yards when a cuirassier officer flung his long blade high in the air. The wavering columns slowed, jolting up and down like rocking-horses as the men sawed on the bits. Above the din of the firing sounded the cracked blowing of the cavalry trumpets. A single shining figure turned and sped after the empty saddle, a little group followed, a line veered round clumsily and started back, then the whole lurching mass pulled about and went back through the heaped-up bodies on the ground, the white horse with the empty saddle galloping steadily before them.

A hoarse yell went up from every heavy-eyed, broken-spirited infantryman in the long lines. The two pummeled columns broke into little driblets of men, who ran down to the shore, plunged into the current, and started splashing for the opposite bank without an apparent thought of the hail of metal slashing through them. The gunners jumped from their shelter and jammed the shells into the cold breeches of the guns. The supporting column awoke, and its front was suddenly lighted by a thousand flashes of fire.

SOMETHING broke in the enemy's front. There was a growing unsteadiness in his raking volleys, a strange halting in the angry purr of the quick-firers and the pumping guns. The brown infantry, yelling and brandishing their guns, pressed on through the shallow water of the fords which a little time before had been to them as inaccessible as the blue vault above. The gunners were serving their pieces where it had been impossible for a thing as big as a man to stand upright and live.

The General sat down on the ground rather weakly, with a sensation of complete exhaustion and a desire to weep like a child. He was cowed — scared by something bigger than the snarl of Maxims, the rush of infantry, and the charge of horsemen — although it had won him a battle and saved his name the stigma of an unexcused defeat. For he knew that he had been beaten — and that a single regiment of horse could not have saved him. He looked across at the jagged hills up which his infantry were already commencing to climb, and he was awed.

"They're beaten," he said faintly, "beaten by four centuries of a thing called tradition — and an empty saddle!"

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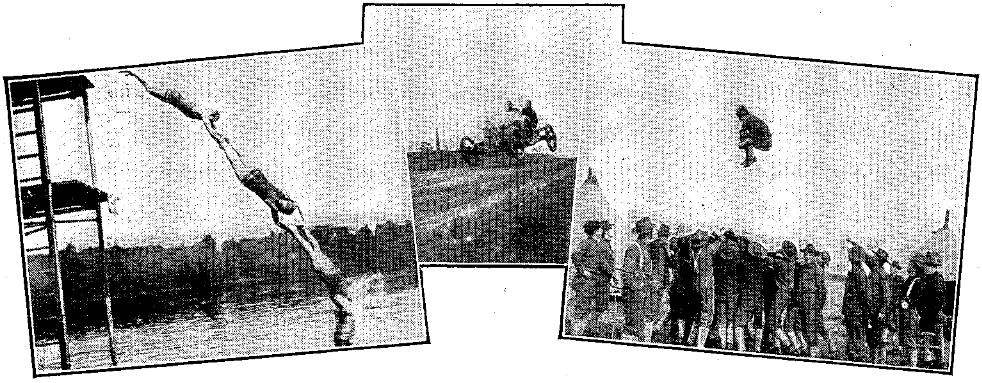

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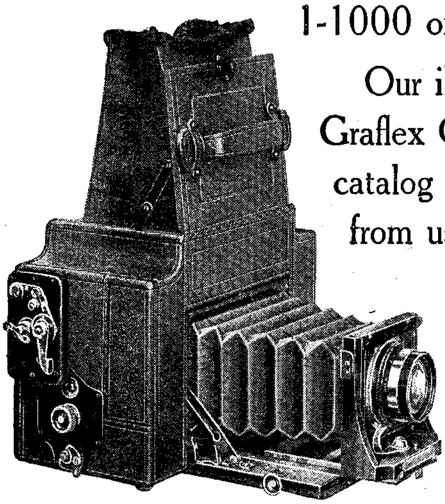

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THE MONTESSORI MOVEMENT

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TWO years ago McCLURE'S MAGAZINE published an article on the work of the great Italian educator, Dr. Maria Montessori. The article described the new ideas that Dr. Montessori had introduced in education, and the success that she had met with in her first schools in Rome. At that time Dr. Montessori was scarcely known outside of a limited circle in her own country. In a few weeks, however, her name had reached practically every part of the civilized world. Few magazine articles have attracted such widespread and spontaneous interest. The press of the United States and of nearly every country in Europe reprinted the article in whole or in part, and letters have come flowing into the McCLURE office by the thousand.

In view of this great and increasing interest, the editors of McCLURE'S decided to publish every month a regular Montessori Department, to serve as a central bureau of information regarding the progress of the movement and as an open forum for discussion. Correspondence is particularly invited. A place will be found for letters of interest, and, when possible, Dr. Montessori's own reply to special questions will be obtained.

Answers to Correspondents

A MULTITUDE of letters have come to this department in response to the request for correspondence. These have in every case been answered; but so many questions appear over and over again that it seems wise to select a number for public reply in this issue of the magazine. In the August number Dr. Montessori's views on the imagination of the child, and its training, will be discussed, and questions referring to that phase of the method will be answered then.

Where is the Montessori material manufactured, and at what price?

The didactic material used in the Montessori method of educating young children is manufactured in this country only by the House of Childhood, 200 Fifth Avenue, New York City. The price is fifty dollars, which includes a copy of the translation in English of Dr. Montessori's book. The material is manufactured and sold in England by Philips & Tacey, London, and in Italy by Pizzoli & Co., Milan. Dr. Montessori has in preparation a manual of instruction for the use of the material.

Can you furnish a Montessori bibliography?

The following bibliography of the Montessori movement includes books and articles published up to April, 1913:

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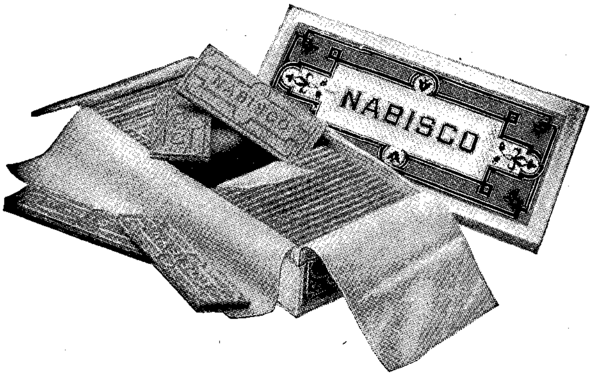

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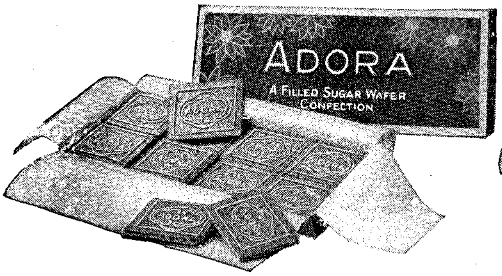

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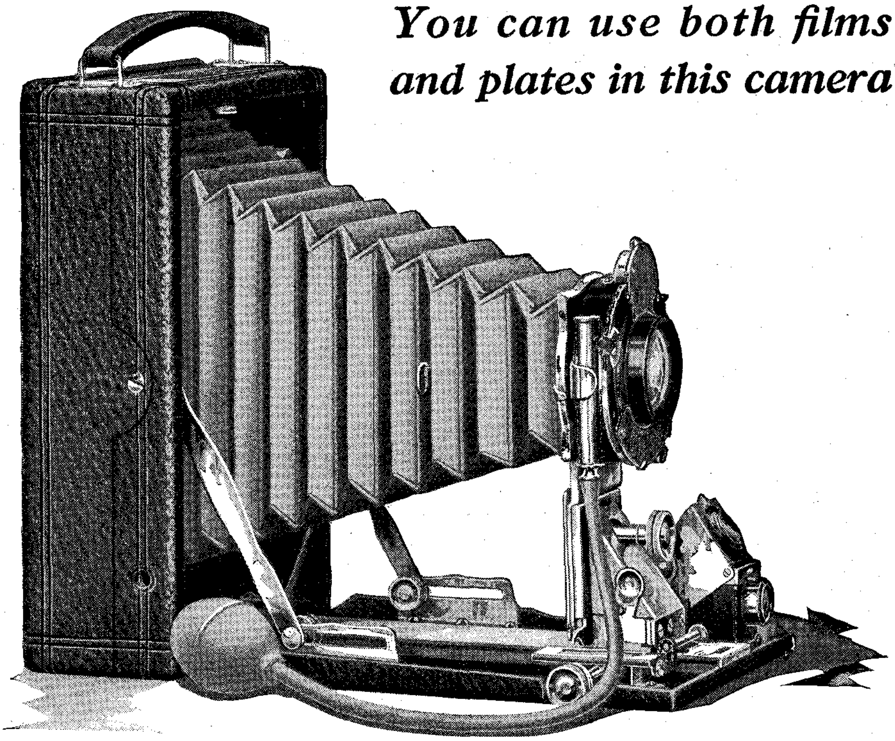

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Rochester Optical Division, Eastman Kodak Co., Rochester, N. Y.

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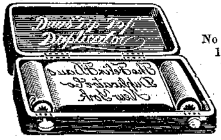
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How can teachers trained in this method be obtained?

The Montessori American Committee is willing to assist any who desire teachers for Montessori classes or any teachers who desire positions. Address the Committee at 443 Fourth Avenue, New York.

Where are schools located in which the method is in use?

In addition to the Montessori classes given in the February issue may be mentioned the following schools which have incorporated the Montessori system in their curriculum:

St. Michael's School, Lexington Avenue and 39th St., New York.

Union Settlement Kindergarten, 237 East 104th St., New York.

Miss Wheeler's School, Providence, R. I.

This is, of course, an incomplete list, and does not include schools in Europe.

Will there be a training course in Rome next year, or lectures and classes in this country this summer?

It is impossible, as yet, to make any announcement regarding a training course in Rome next year or regarding summer courses of lectures or classes by teachers returning from Rome.

Does Dr. Montessori approve of teaching young children a foreign language?

Dr. Montessori expresses herself as heartily in favor of young children learning a foreign language. She favors the direct conversational method, using games, songs, pictures, and charts. The material for sense-training could be explained in one language as well as another. The sandpaper and script alphabets could also be used, and the proper phonetic combinations given.

What information can you give regarding Dr. Montessori's extension of her method into primary grades?

Reports are reaching us of the success of the method when carried into the primary grades. Dr. Montessori has devised material for this purpose, which will soon be put on the market in this country. There should be great economy of time when the technique for writing, number, and reading is acquired in the sub-primary stage. The child who has learned in his first year, at a Montessori school, self-control and intelligent self-direction of his activities, should develop rapidly and independently in the processes of number, in reading for interpretation of thought, and in oral and written expression of his own thoughts.

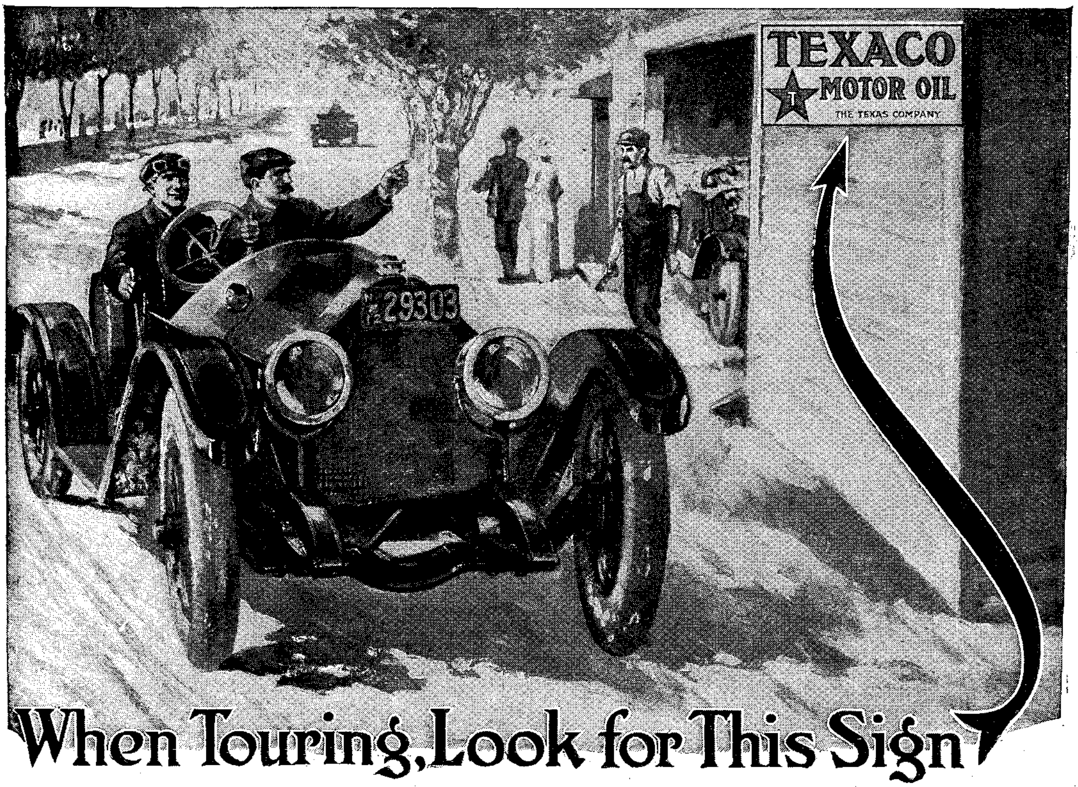
Can you recommend any books suitable for the development of the senses of rhythm and tone?

The following have been useful in developing the sense of rhythm, of tone, and of musical expression:

"Play Songs from the Song Senses," by Alys E. Bentley. A. S. Barnes & Co., New York.

"Tone Plays," by the same.

"Music for the Child World," by Marie Ruif Hofer. Clayton F. Summer Co., Chicago.



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THE HOME-COMING OF CLEMENT ALBRICHT

BY

OCTAVIA ROBERTS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

CYRUS FOSMIRE

EVEN the short accommodation train that rattled over the prairie in the waning afternoon was filled with Thanksgiving cheer. Every seat in the overheated car was occupied, every rack above bulged with bundles. The floor also was covered with baggage that gave foot-rests for the dangling feet of eager little children, who asked at every station how far they were still from Grandma.

Perhaps the one figure in the passenger coach whose baggage was limited to a shabby valise was a little lady in rusty black, with a pretty, refined face and a smile of ready sympathy for the happiness of those about her. With unflagging patience she listened to the stories of the old German woman beside her concerning a grandson with whom she was going to spend the holiday. The old woman's questions regarding herself she skilfully evaded, admitting nothing beyond the fact that Gardener was her destination, and that she had lived there as a little girl.

As the train came within view of the lights of that prairie town, the woman's smile went out, leaving her thin face white and drawn. In an effort to pierce the November dusk, she pressed close to the window. The old woman by her side, in a kind of stolid dismay, saw that she was weeping.

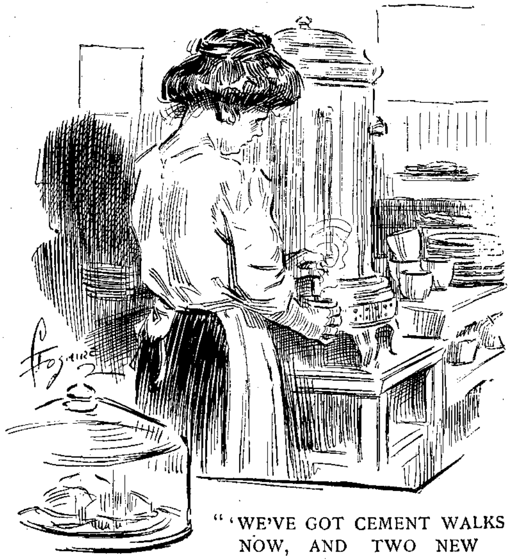
At that moment a chubby child in front leaned over and touched the lady's hand that lightly grasped the seat. His face dimpled roguishly at his daring. The tears still in her eyes, the woman turned, and, after a moment's struggle, joined in a play of peep and hide that ended in her impulsively drawing him over the seat on to her knees. With his warm body in her arms, his fat little legs rhythmically kicking the seat in his content, the woman's sunny smile returned. Not until the train pulled up at Gardener did she restore him to his mother's arms, unclasping his clinging arms and stooping to kiss his apple cheeks as she did so. At the door she turned again, with a wave of her hand; then, squaring her slender shoulders, she got off the train.

Once on the platform, Clement Albricht gazed, with a curiosity that had a quality of tenderness, at the rambling old shed of a station from whose doorway sounded the clang of a dinner bell. With an effort, she opened the door to the waiting-room, hoping that some friendly face might greet hers. But the ticket agent behind the railed inclosure was a stranger, and the woman who had rung the bell gazed with a stranger's careless indifference at the little lady who hesitatingly ordered coffee.

"Gardener didn't have a dining-room when I left here ten years ago," she said to the girl who served her. "I suppose there must be many other changes."

The girl stared. "Sure, it's changed a lot in the five years I've been here; some say it's gone ahead of Clifton. We've got cement walks everywhere now — tore up the last of the planks this fall. And two new drug stores have located here. The First M. E. has been rebuilt, and Mr. Moneypenny has put up a three-story building."

The lady started. "Have there been any changes in his family?"



"'WE'VE GOT CEMENT WALKS NOW, AND TWO NEW DRUG STORES'"

"I ain't acquainted with him myself," the girl apologized. "His wife is living still — awful delicate. Did he ever have any children?"

"No," the lady said. She put down her heavy cup, opened a lean purse, paid the girl, then hesitated, bag in hand.

A man opened an inner door and peered in. "Hello," said the girl. "Here's Mr. Slocum; want your trunk fetched anywheres?"

The baggageman came forward. He was well built and middle-aged, and his face showed round and florid above a flannel shirt. "Thought I'd look in and see if there was any baggage before I went home," he explained. "They said a stranger had come." He stopped short and looked into the woman's face. "Stranger! I do declare, it's Mrs. Albricht!" He held out a large, warm hand and grasped hers, while from his height he beamed cheerfully down at her. "You don't know me, I'll be bound."

She shook her head, her lips parted in a smile of gentle apology, her eyes searching his face.

"John Slocum, that married Anna."

"Anna!" Her cry was all sweet recollection. "Not our Anna? Anna, that sewed for me until I was a woman?"

"Yes, ma'am. Her and me was married the year after you left. You remember John, as kept company with her? We was going together along of ten years." He dropped his own story to ask, with an interest that was al-

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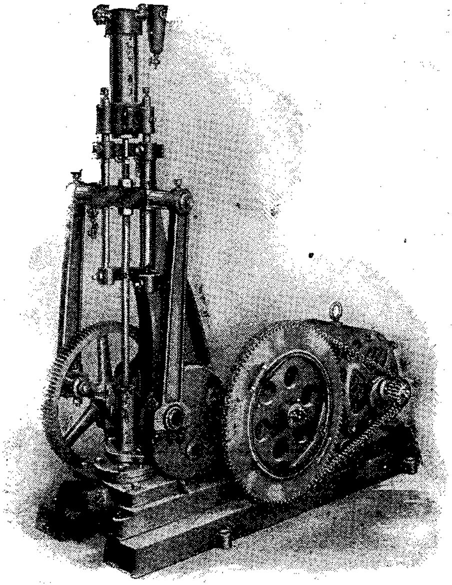

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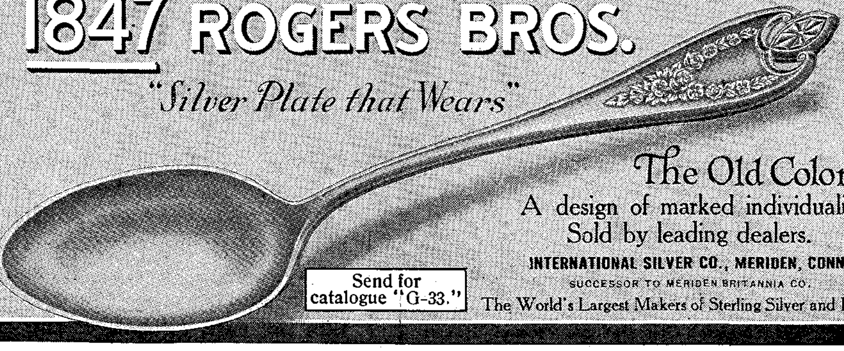

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most caressing: "Where shall I fetch your trunk, Mrs. Albricht? I p'sume likely you've come back to spend Thanksgiving."

Her eyes, still on his, swam with sudden tears. "I've come back to stay, John, and to see if I can get anything to do in Gardener among my old friends. If you don't mind, I'll leave my trunk until morning. I'll go to my aunt's, Mrs. Moneypenny's, to-night. Tell dear Anna I'm glad to hear of her happiness — that it's sweet to me to have had my first friendly words from her husband."

He shook her hand again, moved by her frail, brave little figure. Then, with a mighty hand, he swung her bag behind the lunch-counter and opened the door for her exit. With a pretty, friendly bow that included the girl, she went out into the dark.

"Mrs. Albricht!" the man called. Then, as she stopped, his voice sank to a confidential rumble. "If it shouldn't be convenient at Mrs. Moneypenny's,— not but what it *will,* — you know you'll be mighty welcome at our house. Just come right over,— it's on Saunders' corner,— and stay till you're settled."

A look of relief crossed her face. "Thank you; I may come," she murmured.

"If Anna ain't there," he continued, "just go in and set down. She's been took up with settling the new Home — been busy all day with some others of the Ladies' Aid. She's kind of set her heart on getting it ready for Thanksgiving."

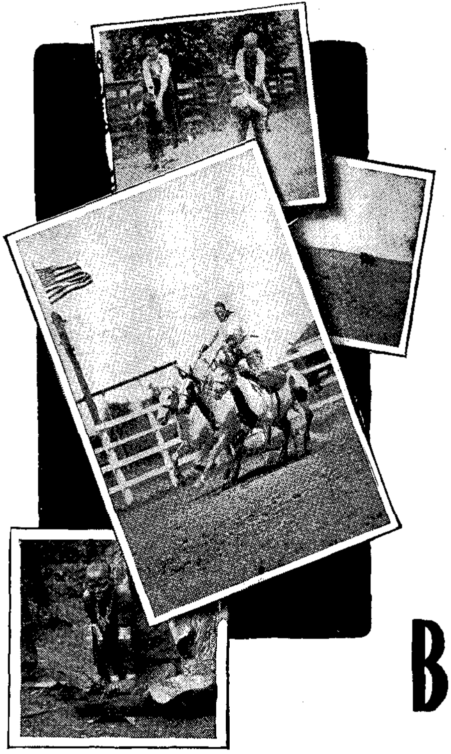
Mrs. Albricht raised her brows inquiringly. "The new Home?"

"The little brown house where the Lathrops used to live. The last of the old maids died, and left it to the church. Anna got 'em to fix it up for the children at the poor farm. We're going to fetch 'em over to-morrow. Good-by, then, Mrs. Albricht. Remember, if you want to come, you'll be mighty welcome."

"A FRIEND of yourn, Mr. Slocum?" the girl asked, as Mrs. Albricht disappeared.

He leaned his arm sociably on the counter. "Didn't you ever know her? She was Miss Clement Carey, Mrs. Moneypenny's niece, brought up proud, you might say. Nothing too good for her, m' wife tells me. When she was about ending school her father died, owing a lot of money to old Moneypenny. They took the girl home with them, and from what we've heerd they made her feel it. Anna sewed there in them days, and she do say they certainly didn't let her forget it."

He lowered his voice, though no one was in the waiting-room. "Old Moneypenny would skin the bark off a tree, and he never forgot her father's debt, nor what her keep cost him.



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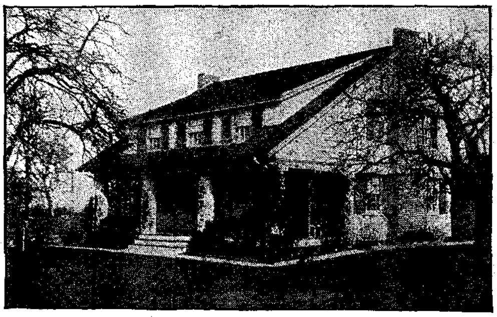

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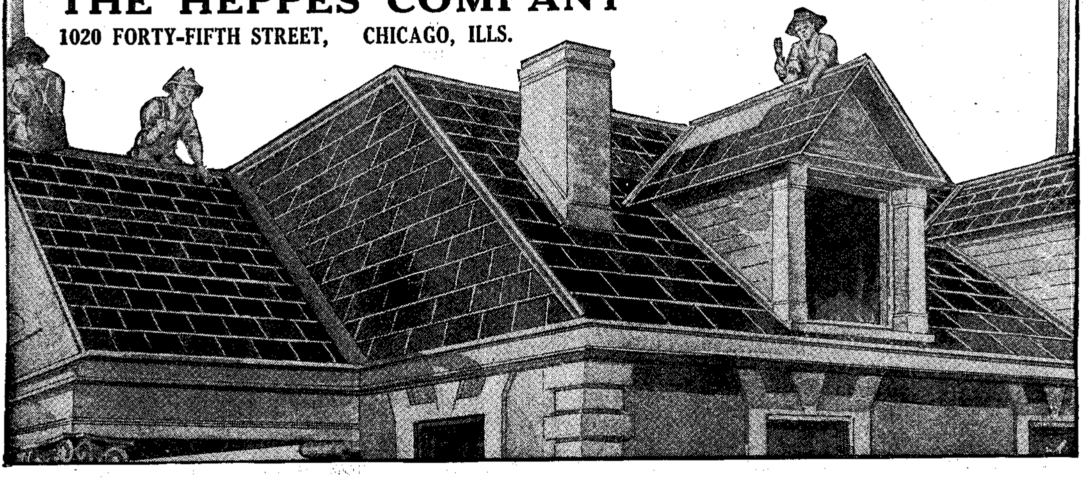
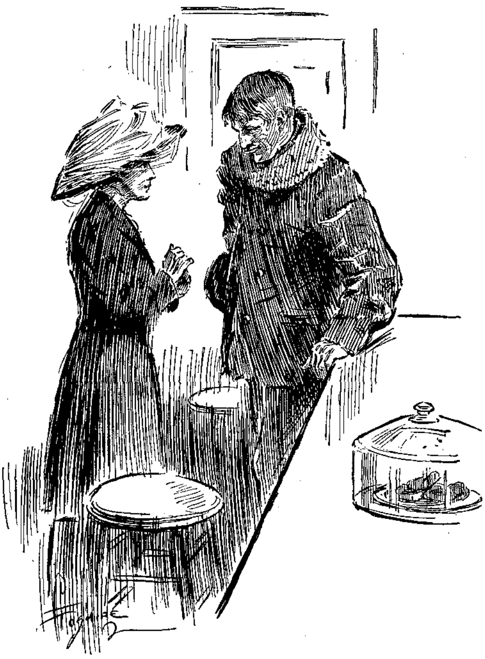


As time went on, a nephew of his took a great shine to her; then we all thought things were coming out all right. The old man thawed out quite a bit. But, as luck ran, she wouldn't look at him — married a stranger called Ernest Albricht and went outside to live. That's all I can tell you. Never heard a word of her since. The minute I seen her, though, her face come back to me — just the same pretty little face it always was, though, of course, she's getting old, like the rest of us."



"'I DO DECLARE, IT'S MRS. ALBRICHT! YOU DON'T KNOW ME, I'LL BE BOUND'"

The girl behind the counter adjusted an immense pompadour that toppled heavily over one eye, and vouchsafed succinctly: "I seen that she was a perfect lady."

Mrs. Albricht, meanwhile, was making her way up a neat brick walk, bordered by funereal snow-capped evergreens, to a large brick house whose shuttered windows and heavy mansard roof frowned forbiddingly down upon her.

Her ring was answered, after a long interval, by a rough maid-of-all-work, who wiped her hands on a gingham apron and critically examined the card Mrs. Albricht presented before she admitted her into the icy front parlor.

The chill of her aunt's welcome as she entered the room, advancing rigidly, wrapped in a cashmere shawl, was covered somewhat by the maid, who preceded her to light a reluctant fire in the shining grate. Before the brave crackling of the kindling had given place to the slow smolder of the coal, Mrs. Moneypenny had taken her seat on a distant sofa, with a polite formality that ignored their long parting and the tie of blood.

"You're looking very well, Clement," she said. "Are you passing through Gardener?"

Mrs. Albricht bit her trembling lips to quiet before replying: "I've come to Gardener to live, aunt."

"To live! Is your husband to settle here?"

"I left my husband five years ago."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Moneypenny, with raised eyebrows. She drew her shawl closer and applied a stiff handkerchief to her thin lips and straight nose. The action hinted at colds and draughts and delicate nerves that must be spared excitement.

"I've come to try and earn my living here among old friends," her niece continued. "Oh, aunt, I must earn it! Believe me, I've had a bitter struggle. There's nothing I haven't tried to do. I've clerked in stores; I've tried to sell things from door to door; I've been a chambermaid."

Mrs. Moneypenny reached out a thin hand and closed the door, a look of slow horror passing over her face. "A servant?"

"There was nothing else to do. But it's always the same — I can't succeed. I'm not a business woman. I'm not even very strong. Oh, aunt, can't you help me? I have no one else in the world."

"You will remember," Mrs. Moneypenny retorted, "that you have cost your uncle considerable already. I don't know whether he would — you know, you crossed him directly."

Mrs. Albricht clasped her hands in her lap and leaned forward. "I don't ask money. But give me a temporary shelter — help me some way to help myself. I haven't anything. I borrowed the money to reach Gardener."

"Don't you think," suggested Mrs. Moneypenny, "that you would do better in a larger place?" She applied the stiff handkerchief again to her face, sneezing gently.

Mrs. Albricht arose. She was very white. "You can't help me?"

"I shall have to ask Mr. Moneypenny. He's been at great expense lately. I don't know what he'll say, but he *may* know of something. He won't like your having left your husband. Clement, is there no chance of a reconciliation?"

"None," said Mrs. Albricht. She lifted eyes with dull misery to her aunt's. Mrs. Moneypenny fidgeted in her chair. There was

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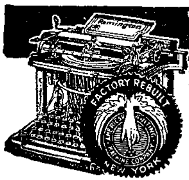

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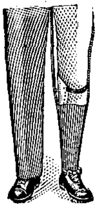

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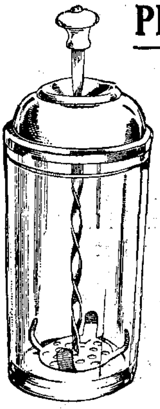

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a long silence. At length she drew from her belt a large gold watch and noted the time.

"Your uncle will be here any moment, Clement. I think it would be just as well for me to tell him of your arrival first." She moved uneasily in her chair and half rose.

Mrs. Albricht moved toward the door. "I'll go," she said, with quiet desperation. "Remember, I've struggled alone for five years before appealing to you, aunt."

"If you had only taken Otto," said Mrs. Moneypenny plaintively. "He owns half the county. His wife is a *very* happy woman."

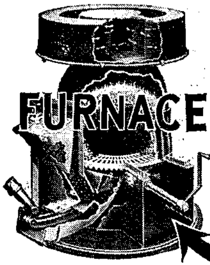
Mrs. Albricht smiled wanly. "My life seems all 'ifs,'" she said. "I've missed the right turn somewhere. Good night."

"Good night," said Mrs. Moneypenny. She let her niece open the stiff front door, covering herself from the November blast it admitted into the entry. No reference was made to a further meeting.

THE Moneypenny residence, in spite of Gardener's growth, was still on the edge of the town. Once outside the gate, Clement Albricht walked heavily down the country road, the fear of the unfrequented way and the crackling of naked trees mingling with the deeper terror of the future. She had come, she told herself, to the end of her resources; in the cold and darkness she was stumbling on, she knew not whither. Then suddenly, through the trees, she beheld a rambling building from which light streamed. In lieu of all other plans, she followed blindly. But as she drew nearer, with a start that forced a cry from her lips, she remembered that the house whence the light shone must be the county poorhouse. Another turn revealed the sagging frame building in an unkempt yard. From its loose doors and windows the smell of coarse food oozed out on the night. Clement Albricht rested her hands on the swaying rail fence and stared into the grounds.

Why go farther? Did not her road end here? Was not this the shelter of the unfit? Here, at least, were warmth and light and human companionship.

She drew near the gate, and placed her hand on the latch. As she paused, a boy stole out of the back door, and, creeping along the fence to a wood-pile not far from where Clement stood, called guardedly: "Here, Brownie, Brownie." At his voice a cur sidled apologetically from its shelter. Its tail wiggled ecstatically at the smell of food. Before it had set its teeth hungrily in the remnants of meat, however, a sinewy woman darted from the house, hurled a missile at the shrinking dog, and, seizing the child, thrust him violently before her



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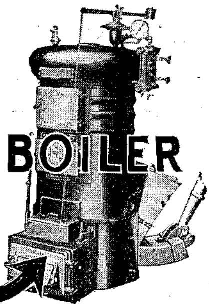

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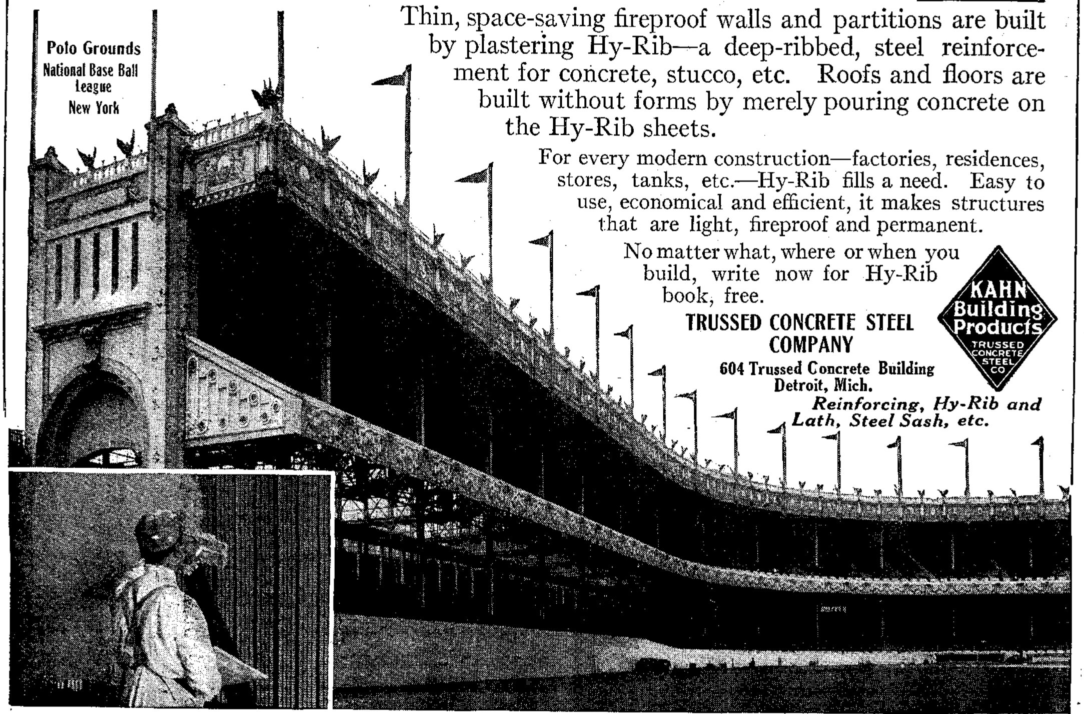

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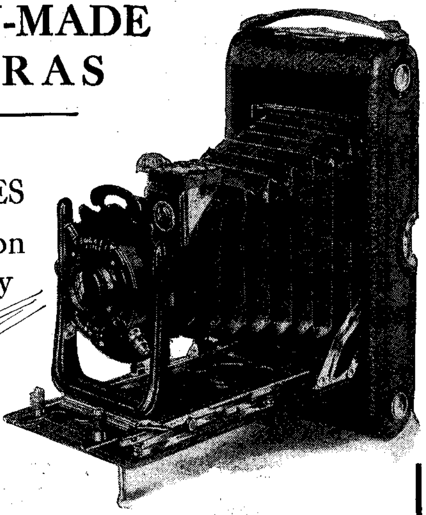

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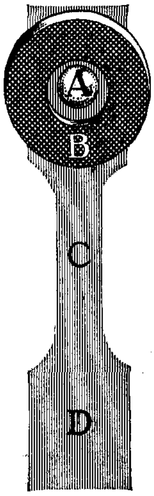

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into the house. "I'll learn you to steal meat!" she screamed. The boy's ready arm and shoulder could not shield him from her stinging blows.

With shaking knees, and a face white and set, Clement hurried away, stopping her ears to drown the child's screams. "Poor little fellow!" she kept sobbing. "Poor little fellow!" Once, as she looked back over her shoulder, the upper windows of the house were plainly visible. To her wonder, several were heavily barred, and from one of them a withered face looked and leered, nodding incessantly. It was there that children must live, Clement thought stormily — but no; Anna, good kind Anna, was even now preparing a place for their removal. And Anna's husband had told her that she would be welcome under their roof. She was not yet friendless.

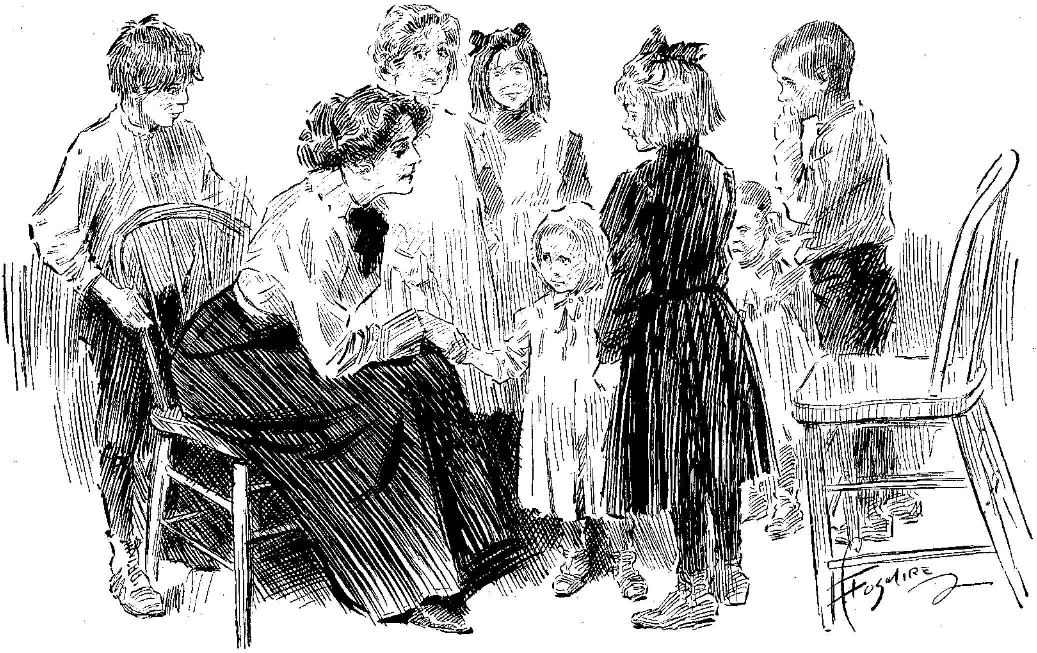
A quarter of an hour later Clement reached the Slocums' cottage door. All her waning strength and courage went out, at last, in her timid knock. In another instant the light of the lamp shone through the open door, and, with a cry of honest affection that stilled all Mrs. Albricht's smouldering doubts of welcome, Anna had drawn her to her breast.

"Anna," she said dully, "I'm destitute. Will you take me in?"

"Take you in!" Anna's cry was all reproach. "We're so pleased to see you, we don't know what to do. Ain't we, John? Get her a chair, dear; she can't hardly stand."

John Slocum drew forward for the guest a rocker before the base-burner. She slipped into its depths wearily, her lashes sweeping her cheek. Anna, on her knees, removed her rubbers, silencing her faint protestations. "I guess Anna has taken off your rubbers before this, honey, and she can do it again. Put your feet up to the fire." Her face grew sober at the worn shoes Mrs. Albricht held to the heat.

With a fine courtesy, Anna refrained from plying her guest with any questions, talking as she moved heavily, yet softly, from kitchen to parlor, of the changes in Gardener, the weather, the preparations for Thanksgiving. As she spoke she had drawn off Mrs. Albricht's coat and hat, and placed some food on a little table by her side. "If I'd only known you were coming," she said sunnily, "I'd have had some corn bread for you, like your mother taught me how to make."



"'DO WE BELONG TO HER?' ASKED ONE OF THE BABIES"

At the mention of her mother Clement's cup shook in her hand, and she put it down untasted. "Anna — John — what can I do? Mrs Moneypenny says I'll find nothing here; that I ought to go to a larger place. She didn't offer to take me in, even for the night." All her pretty smiles had faded; her face was ashen and lined.

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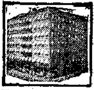

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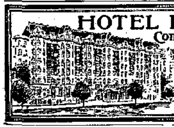

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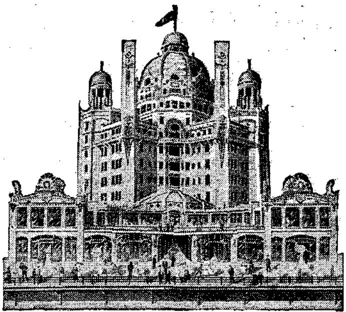

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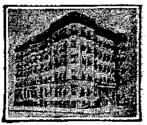

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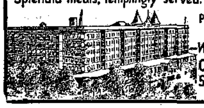

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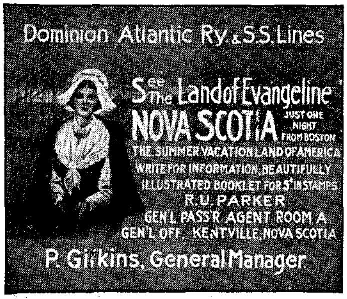

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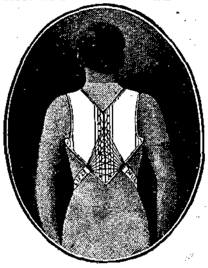

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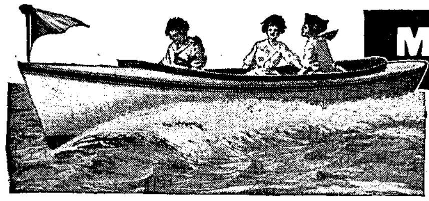

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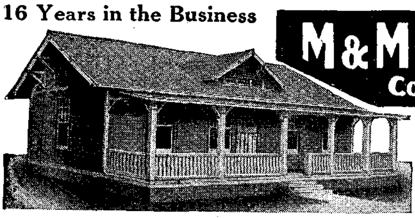

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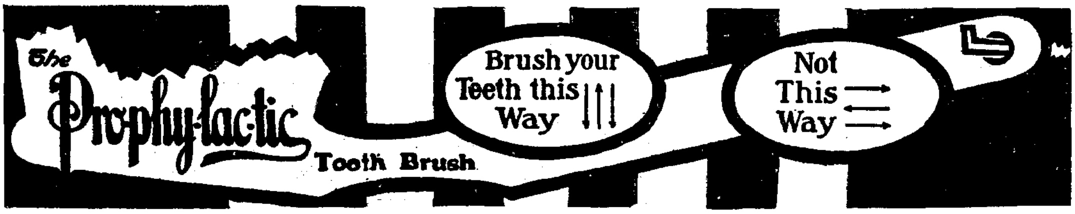
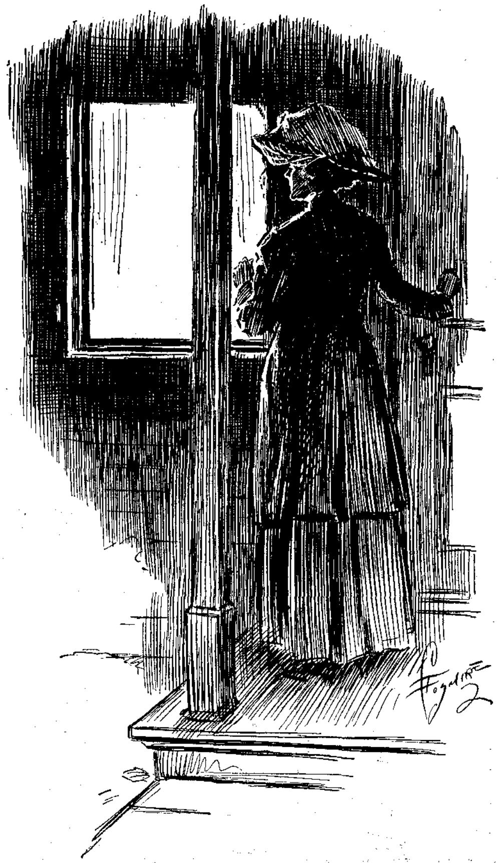


by her glance to enforce her argument. "What does she know about work in Gardener, anyway! When you want to know about work, go to workin'-people; that's my advice. A woman so mean that she always pulled out bastin' threads and wound 'em on a spool for me to use over ain't apt to be doin' much thinkin' for other people, anyway."

Anna removed the tray and table. "You're all worn out, my darling girl. I'm going to put you to bed."

The inner room, in its white immaculateness, seemed to have been awaiting the little woman. With loving fingers Anna helped her to undress. When she was at last among the pillows, Anna stooped and kissed her, and carried out the light, as she had often done when Clement was a child.

In her warm nest Clement lay still, the terrors of the outer world temporarily banished. In the front room Anna's kind voice murmured on, in a long conversation with John. Clement knew it was of her they were talking. "Go telegraph your folks we can't come for Thanksgiving"— Anna's voice floated to her through the door. "I wouldn't leave Miss Clemmie for anything. If she ever needed a friend, it's now."



"ALL HER WANING STRENGTH AND COURAGE WENT OUT IN HER TIMID KNOCK"

Clement sat up in the bed, trembling violently. Even here she was intruding, breaking the plans of these good people for the holiday. She stilled the impulse to call Anna and insist on going farther; for, alas, had she not exhausted her means, her strength?

The following morning, however, when Clement awoke, Anna had gone out. A note on the pin-cushion directed her to her breakfast in the oven, and to the little Home if she should wish to follow.

John Slocum, coming into the house later, found her about the cottage, busying herself putting it to rights. After her night's sleep the color had come back to her cheeks, the wistful smile played on her lips.

"Makin' yourself to home? That's good," he said, with quiet satisfaction. "I've seen several of your old friends this morning. There ain't goin' to be any trouble at all about your gettin' work, Mrs. Albricht. Mrs. Enderly says you ought to advertise for a position as companion to some old person; there must be people who'd appreciate havin' a lady like you."

Her hand tightened on the back of a chair, her knowledge of the hopelessness of that quest saddening her face. "At any rate," he glowed, "there's plenty for a lady of your education to do. Miss Butler says you used to paint beautifully; you had ought to get scholars."

A vision of the satin scarfs decorated after the fashion of her girlhood passed before her — of the days when she too, in her ignorance, had supposed these marketable.

"Anyway," he concluded, disappointed that her face did not kindle, "you are to stay here as long as you've a mind to. You could visit in Gardener a year." He reached for his hat, and paused. "Are you all right here alone, Mrs. Albricht? I've got to go over to the Home with some more things. Anna thought she'd be back before this. Miss Meeker's come, all right, but the children are scared to death. Seems like they've been drove from one place to another so much that they're afraid to change again. I had to fairly drag 'em away from the poorhouse. One little lame fellow clung to a silly old man he'd took to calling Grandpa, till it would make your heart bleed."

Clement's face lightened. "I'll go with you," she suggested.

"Better come over when things are settled," he demurred.

She resolutely pinned on her hat. "I can comfort them. Children like me; we understand each other."

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PAUL von BOECKMANN, R. S.
1946 World's Tower 110 W. 40th Street New York City

She walked by his side through the village streets until they reached the little brown house in the snow. Here, in the front room, by an ancient melodeon, they found the children — six of them cowering together: the lame boy; another boy with a shock head too large for his body, whom somebody called Charley; a third, a surly lad of ten, whose habit of raising an arm and shoulder at any approach identified him as the boy Clement had seen the night before; Ida, a thin girl of twelve with a cough, held two toddlers close to her skirts, their shorn heads and thick gingham aprons robbing them of all the natural charm of babyhood. In their midst were Anna and a hard-faced woman with a capable hand. To Anna's coaxings and the hard-faced woman's reiterated "Ain't you grateful for this pretty home?" they made no reply, except wide, startled glances.

"Miss Clemmie, what am I to do?" Anna cried. "Ain't it funny — I never had much knack with children."

"Go upstairs," Mrs. Albricht whispered. "I think I can manage them." Her face was alive with pity and interest.

ALONE with the children, she neither coaxed nor threatened, but, smiling pleasantly, took off her wraps, and bustled unconcernedly about the room as if unmindful of their presence. Once or twice she asked the big shock-headed boy, whose name she had caught, to hand her a book or push forward a chair. With his poor face alight with a pleased, puzzled importance, he eagerly complied. The children watched them both with open curiosity. After a moment or two more Mrs. Albricht seated herself at the melodeon, and jerked from its reluctant frame an old hymn. The children drew nearer, Charley proudly helping to work the stops.

"I kin do that," said Ida suddenly.

Still playing, still smiling, Clement pointed out to the volunteers the stops to press or pull. At the conclusion, Charley laid his heavy head on her shoulder, his weak face swimming with admiration. Ida jealously encircled her waist.

"Onct I went out buggy-ridin'," confided Charley.

"So did I," said the lame boy slowly, drawing nearer. "My uncle kep' a livery stable."

"I never did nothin'; I never went nowhere but just the poorhouse," said the surly boy, in a shamed growl.

"He kin pick up toads an' not git warts," Ida offered in his favor.

Clement's laugh rang out pleasantly. All the love in her sunny nature answered to the children's needs. She drew them close to her knees, and they poured out their confidences.

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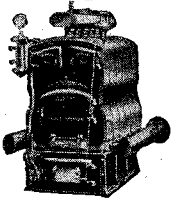

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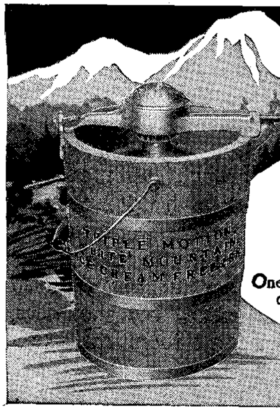
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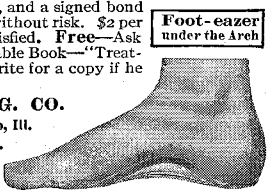

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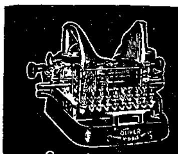

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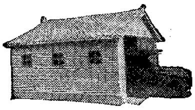

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Anna and the hard-faced woman wonderingly peered in at the door at the little group.

"Do we belong to her?" asked one of the babies. And, to Anna's dismay, the group turned their eyes anxiously, awaiting her answer.

"She can have the job, for all of me," said the hard-faced woman. "I had no idee they'd be such a looking lot. I'm afraid of that silly boy."

Clement's fingers wound about Charley's trembling hand.

"Anna," she whispered, "why can't I stay here? Anna, this is work I *can do.*" Her eyes kindled, her cheeks burned, as she waited, in the confidence of that knowledge.

"Oh, honey, it's no place fer you; the pay is so little," Anna protested. "You'd have to do the cooking."

"I could help her," said Ida shrilly. "I've done cookin' an' dish-washin' at the poor farm."

"You'd have to build fires."

"Naw, she wouldn't; I'd do it fer her," the surly boy said, with a shamed face.

Clement laughed understandingly. "They'll all help me, Anna. They'll be good children. I see it in their faces."

The girl with a cough tucked her fingers through Clement's arm and leaned against her side.

"Well," Anna gave in, "it'll do till you get something better."

"You ought to be very grateful," said the hard-faced woman, "to a lovely lady for staying with you poor orphaned children."

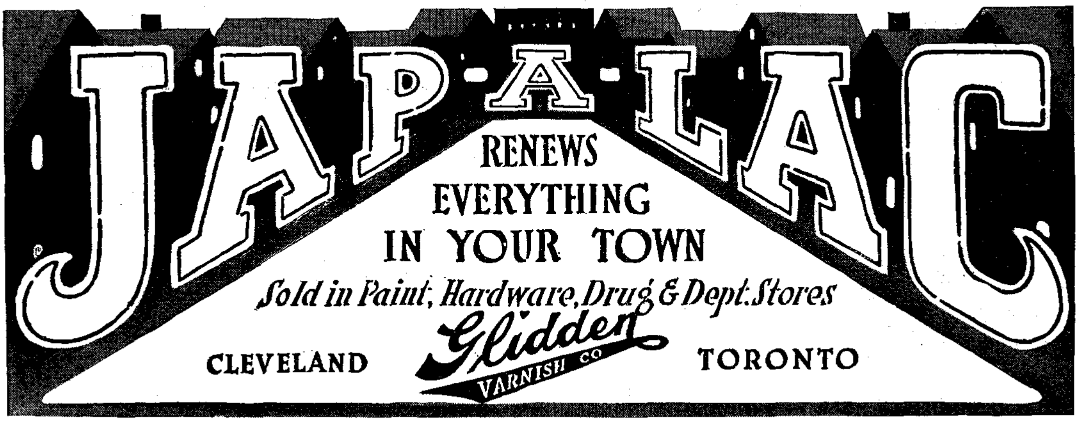
Clement peeped into their faces. "I'm all alone in the world, too. We need each other."

AN hour later the hard-faced custodian announced her formal resignation by departing with a slippery new trunk. "I'd ruther work in some restaurant," she confided. "I was only doing this to accommodate the Ladies' Aid, anyway."

Anna turned from the wagon back to the little brown house, where even in its decline an atmosphere of home, gathered from the generation laid to rest, hovered about its sagging porch and dormer windows.

"It's no place for Miss Clemmie," Anna murmured to herself, "brought up proud, as she was. She had ought to be painting, or speaking French, or doing something for a lady *to* do. I can't bear to leave her to this!" She tied her bonnet smartly under her chin, wrapped her warm blanket shawl about her shoulders, and started toward the front room to take a temporary leave.

On the threshold of the worn door-sill she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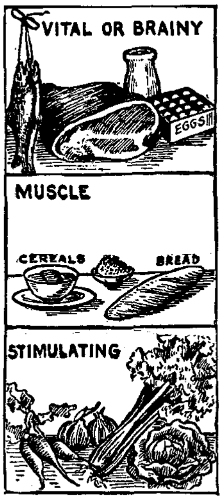

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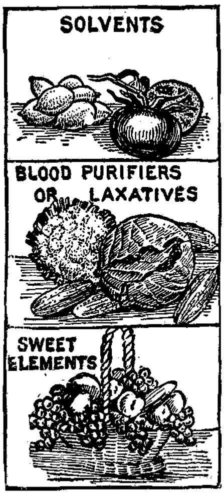

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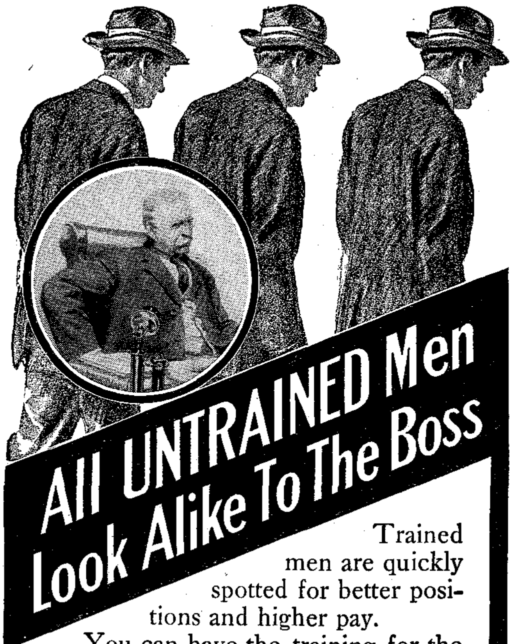
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Poultry Farming
Teacher
Agriculture
Chemist
Spanish
French
German

Name
Present Occupation
Street and No.
City State

paused. The surly boy had thrown open the outer door. Wriggling in apologetically, a dog, short-haired, long-tailed, of no species or all species, clambered joyously toward the children.

"It's Brownie," the surly boy said. He hugged the dog close to his breast. "It's Brownie; he's followed me here."

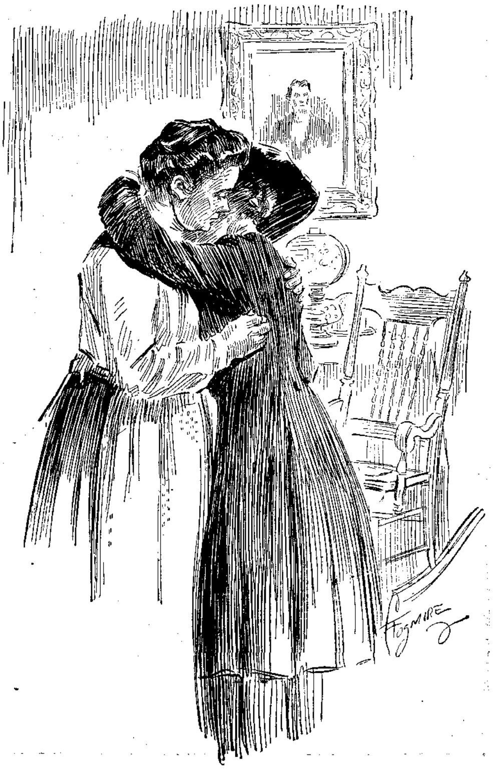
At Clement's approach he raised that quick arm and shoulder as if to ward off a blow; but at her face he dropped his arm and said shyly: "It's Brownie. He ain't nowhere to go. Will you leave him stay too?"

"Leave him stay," the others urged timidly.

"Of course he can stay," answered Clement. "That's what this little brown house is for." She lifted the youngest child in her arms. "Come, children. I'll show you all how to make everything bright and beautiful. For to-morrow is Thanksgiving, and — only think! We're going to spend it — at home."

With the children following closely, she passed up the broad old stairs, Brownie slinking joyously in the rear.

Anna, from the doorway, watched them in silence until they were out of sight. "I was wrong," she said quietly, as she let herself out of the house. "This work ain't beneath her, for there's nothing higher than lovin' and leadin' and guardin' the poor things that nobody else don't want."



Don't trust to memory to preserve the changing likeness of your growing boy or girl. Memory plays strange tricks sometimes.

A good photograph or so every year will keep an accurate record of the subtle changes in their development.

And what a satisfaction that little collection will be to you and to them in after years.

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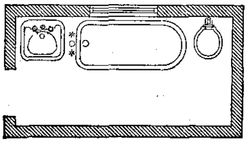
Pertinent Queries for the Home Builder

THIS is the average experience in planning the bathroom equipment of a new home—

First you see your bathroom shown in the architect's blue prints. It looks something like this:



Then you read over the specifications. They call for a bath, a lavatory, etc., described in more or less technical language.

Then the estimates come in and are approved, if they seem reasonable.

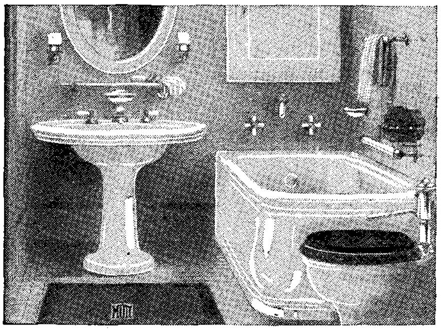
But do you know the *difference between the various kinds of plumbing ware?* Do you know the true economy of Imperial porcelain—vitreous ware—enameled iron?

Do you consider each on the basis of eventual value as well as present cost?

Do you know which will best fit your requirements—which can be most easily kept in spotless condition—which will save repairs—which will contribute most to the value of your building if rented and sold?

Have you studied the possibilities for harmony, for comfort, and for luxury that can be had in modern bathroom equipment?

To answer these pertinent questions we offer a 79-page booklet "Modern Plumbing." It shows 47 views of model bathroom and kitchen interiors with full descriptions and prices of the fixtures used. Sent free.



One of the Model Interiors featured and described in "Modern Plumbing."
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BOOKS OF THE DAY

BY

GARDNER W. WOOD

O Pioneers! The West seems inexhaustible. Here is a totally new kind of story come out of the prairies — *O Pioneers!* by Willa Sibert Cather (Houghton, Mifflin Co.). There have been plenty of realistic studies of the West, but this book is not a study — it is the West in action, a great romantic novel, written with striking brilliancy and power, in which one sees emerge a new country and a new people.

Miss Cather's story deals with the Norwegian and Bohemian pioneers who planted the first seed on the prairies east of Colorado. Alexandra Bergson, a young Swedish girl, is left, at the age of eighteen, to take care of her mother and three younger brothers, and to hold the homestead which her father has vanquished at the cost of his life in the dark early days of the Divide. The figure of this young girl, steadfast, unflinching, self-contained, with her fierce pride and her uncompromising idealism, dominates the whole book. Alexandra is triumphant womanhood — a sort of Nebraska Valkyr, with the daring and confidence of one who carries a new message. The forces of the New World have freed her from the old tradition of woman as a dependent drudge, pouring out her life in self-sacrifice and submission. In the quarrel between Alexandra and her brothers, Oscar and Lou, blindly contending for the proprietorship of their sister, are like voices of another generation, repeating a magic formula that has lost its power.

There is another heroine in the story — little Marie Shabata, the Bohemian girl, beautiful, eager, impulsive, so full of "go" that she can dance all night and drive a hay-cart for her cross husband next morning; too young and high-spirited to step aside and let her life go past her. Frank Shabata, her handsome, sullen husband, resents the youth and gaiety of his young wife; embittered himself, he finds something exasperating in her eager responsiveness to life: and Marie turns to young Emil Bergson.

Throughout the story one has the sense of great spaces; of the soil dominating everything, even the human drama that takes place upon it; renewing itself while the generations come and pass away.

Bobbie, General Manager It is seldom that people who interfere in other folks' affairs are successful; but "Bobbie" proves the exception. Olive Higgins Prouty's heroine in *Bobbie, General Manager* (Stokes) was a domestic readjuster of rare talents. She tells her story herself, sparing no small detail of the methods by which she made her family run smoothly. The tasks she undertook were appalling — or would be for one of less ability. "Bobbie" was a gray little New England "Bunty," pulling the strings not for personal ends but from sheer charity for her race.

Her name was Lucy Chenery Vars, and every one of her five brothers and sisters did something she did not approve of before she got them and herself comfortably settled down to ruminative married life.

The story of her troubles is a gossipy, domestic narrative of much charm. Mrs. Prouty has accomplished the marvel of making a garrulous "butter-in" a sympathetic and lovable figure.

The Nest Anne Douglas Sedgwick possesses to a fine degree the qualities that distinguish the work of Mrs. Wharton. She does not, however, carry them to the same inexorable extremes; she is more humane, and therefore perhaps less inhuman in her dissections. "Tante" was undoubtedly one of the decisive fiction successes of last year. This collection of her shorter writings, *The Nest* (Century), shows the same exquisite sense of proportion and nicety of analysis — and, more, a subdued but none the less effective humor.

These five stories are all studies of woman nature, the man being utilized merely as a screen upon which to project feminine frailties or strength. In the title story, *The Nest*, the husband has been told that he has but a month to live. The effect of this announcement upon his wife and reflexly upon him is startling. *The White Pagoda* is a story of unsuspected social rivalry between two charming widows; *A Forsaken Temple* a tale of feminine jealousy. One of the author's earlier stories is included, for the sake of contrast, perhaps.

The Perfect Food Tonic

The tonic effects of choicest Saazer Hops and nutritive, tissue building properties of the best American Barley are scientifically combined in—

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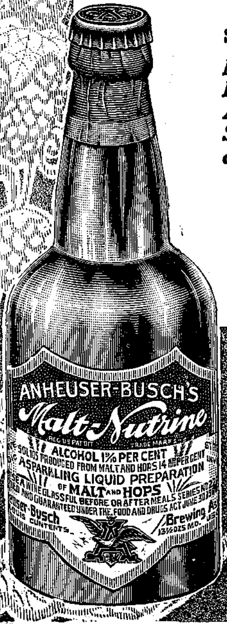
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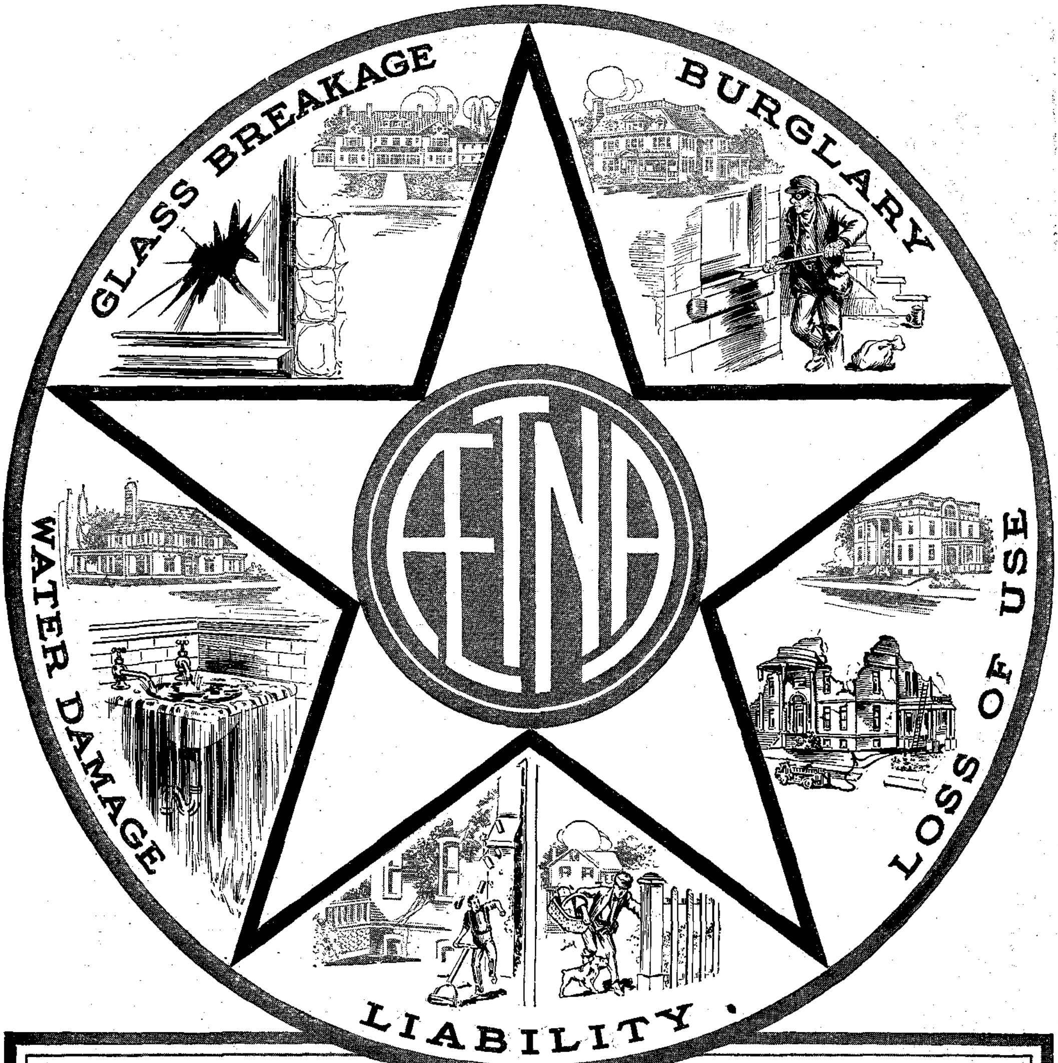

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Insures against Burglary and Theft, against Glass Breakage, against Damage by Leakage of Water or Explosion of Heating Boilers, against Loss of Use or Rent through Fire and other calamities, and against Liability for Injuries to servants or the public,

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McClure's Please mail me full particulars of your Combination Residence Policy.

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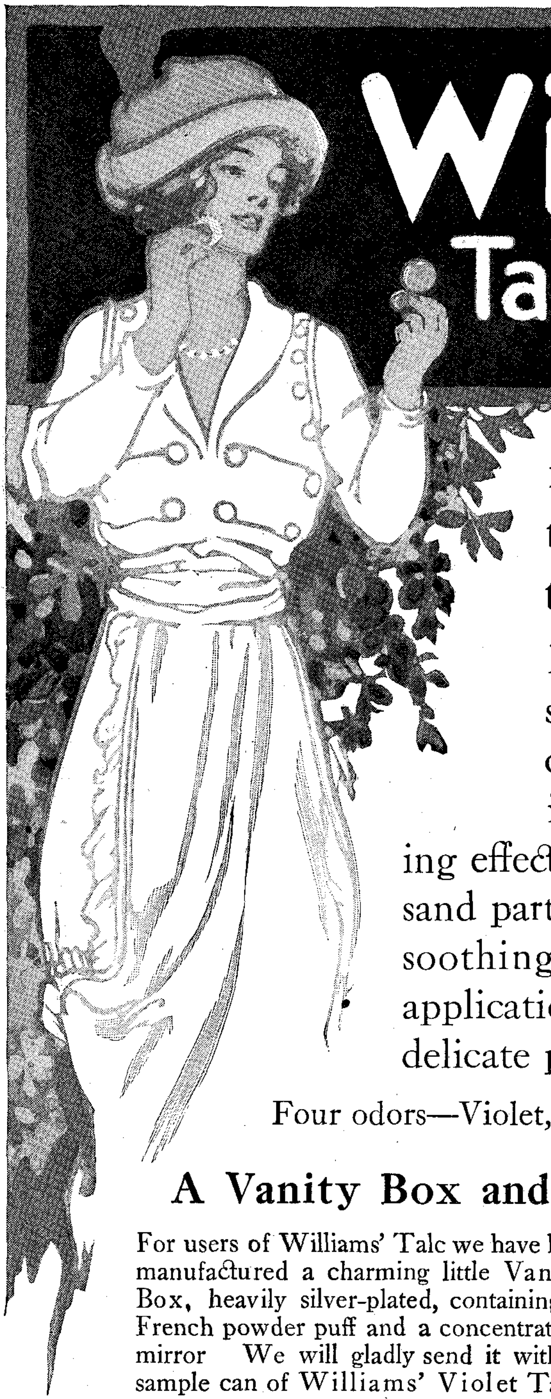

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Four odors—Violet, Carnation, Rose and Karsi

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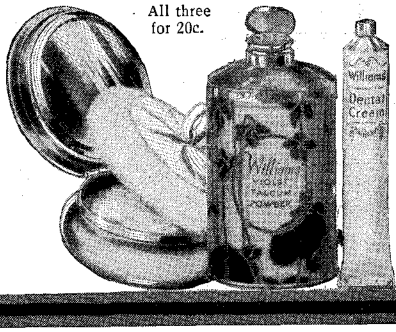
For users of Williams' Talc we have had manufactured a charming little Vanity Box, heavily silver-plated, containing a French powder puff and a concentrating mirror We will gladly send it with a sample can of Williams' Violet Talc Powder and a tube of Williams' Dental Cream, trial size, on receipt of 20 cents in stamps.



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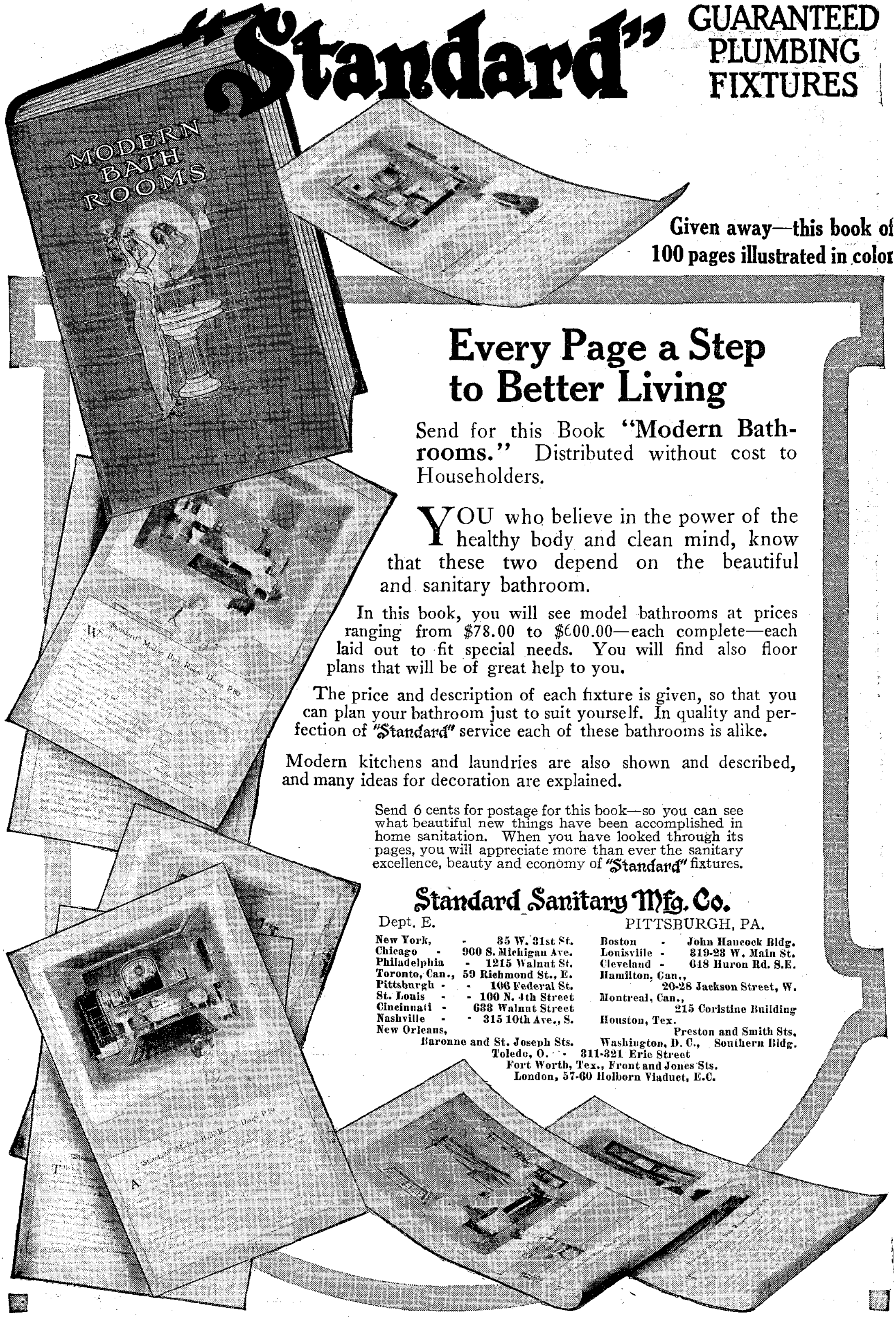

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YOU who believe in the power of the healthy body and clean mind, know that these two depend on the beautiful and sanitary bathroom.

In this book, you will see model bathrooms at prices ranging from $78.00 to $600.00—each complete—each laid out to fit special needs. You will find also floor plans that will be of great help to you.

The price and description of each fixture is given, so that you can plan your bathroom just to suit yourself. In quality and perfection of **"Standard"** service each of these bathrooms is alike.

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Send 6 cents for postage for this book—so you can see what beautiful new things have been accomplished in home sanitation. When you have looked through its pages, you will appreciate more than ever the sanitary excellence, beauty and economy of **"Standard"** fixtures.

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"Tarvia X" is required where new construction is called for. "Tarvia A" and "Tarvia B" are used in improving and protecting roads already in use.

A tarviated road or pavement is practically dustless and mudless and the maintenance cost is, in most cases, so reduced as to more than save the cost of Tarvia treatment.

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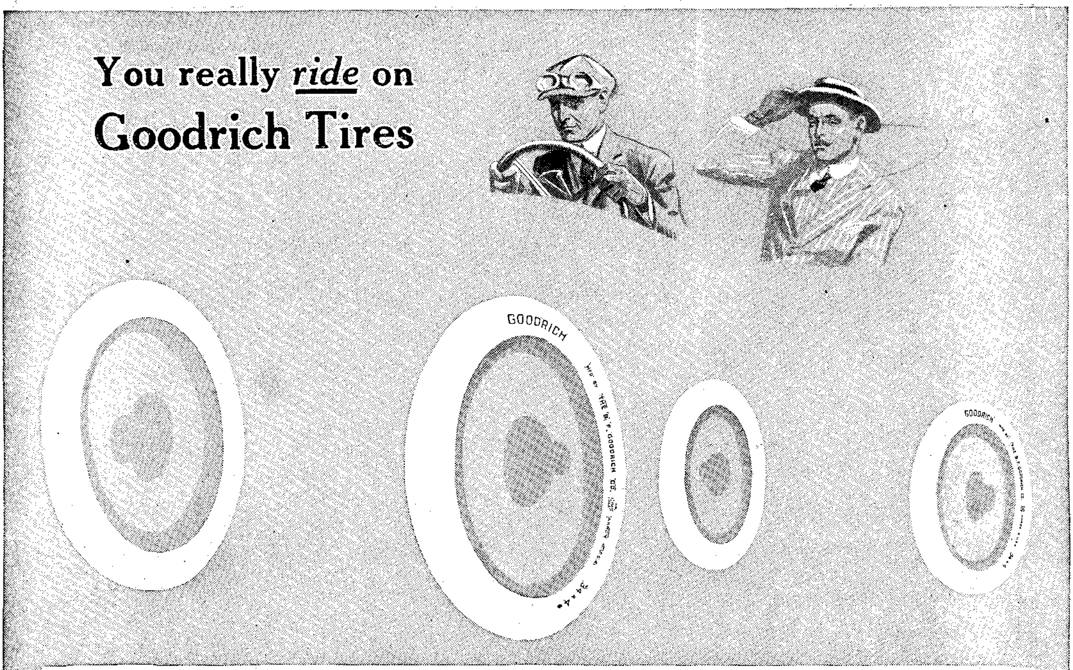

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BEST IN THE LONG RUN

It is the Goodrich principle of Unit Molding which makes each Goodrich Tire—tread, body and all—a single, layerless structure full of life and durability.

Goodrich Unit Molded Tires "make good" for themselves

The usual guarantee goes with each Goodrich Tire, but remember that *the tire itself* makes good. Unit Molding puts the guarantee in the tire—gives it the liveliness and road-resisting quality which insure you the long, continuously-uniform wear and service which you rightfully expect.

We are keeping up with the great demand for Goodrich Tires

Orders for Goodrich Tires to equip 175,000 of 1913's new cars came in before January 1st. These and other preliminary orders indicated to us what the demand would be and we prepared to handle it. Tell your dealer you want Goodrich Tires and you will get them.

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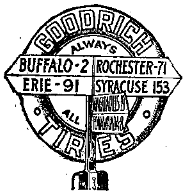
Goodrich dealers, Goodrich branches and Goodrich service stations are alertly ready to satisfy the wants of the tire user immediately. You can get any size or style in Goodrich Tires—*but only one kind and quality.* Write for our free folders telling you how to get the best service from any tire.



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No-Rim-Cut Tires

11% Less This Year

No-Rim-Cut tires are costing us now about 11 per cent less than last year.

And all this saving goes, as always, to users of these tires.

So here is another economy. You have saved all rim-cutting by these new-type tires. You have saved by the oversize. And now you save 11 per cent on price.

How It Happens

Only part of this saving is due to lower rubber. That is largely offset by higher fabrics, higher cost of labor.

The net saving here, in our opinion, warrants five per cent reduction. Some makers say it warrants none.

Our major saving comes through multiplied output. We owe that to users of these tires, and it shall go to them.

Last year's output of Goodyear tires exceeded our previous 12 years put together.

To meet this demand, which has grown like a flood, we have built modern factories, equipped with the latest machinery.

Now we have by far the largest tire plant in the world. By far the largest output. Our capacity is close to 8,000 motor tires daily.

It is this quantity saving which has mainly caused this 11 per cent reduction.

What It Means

Since this reduction, no standard tires of any type cost less than No-Rim-Cut tires.

Some old-type tires—the hooked-base clinchers—last year cost you less. But 23 per cent of those tires become rim-cut.

Tires just rated size cost less last year. But our 10 per cent oversize, under average conditions, adds 25 per cent to the tire mileage.

So No-Rim-Cut tires, at their higher cost, were by far the cheaper-per-mile tires. They were so much the cheaper, per mile, that they came to outsell every other tire.

Now they cost nothing extra, so the savings are clear. Who can think it wise, under such conditions, to buy old-type clincher tires?

Hundreds of thousands of experienced motorists have come to No-Rim-Cut tires. And legions more come monthly.

They are coming because of mileage figures, because of lower upkeep.

They have ended rim-cutting. They are getting extra capacity. And now they get a lower price. Are not those the things you seek?

Ask any user what they mean to him, and you'll adopt them, too.

GOODYEAR
AKRON, OHIO

No-Rim-Cut Tires
With or Without Non-Skid Treads

10% Oversize

Always the Lowest

No equal tires will ever cost less than Goodyears. None will ever cost less per mile.

This is how we know it:

The largest output means the lowest cost. And No-Rim-Cut tires are, more and more, bound to outsell all others.

Modern factories, with the latest machinery, greatly cut cost of production. And the sensational demand for these new-type tires has forced this new equipment.

Then we cling to small capitalization. We have not one dollar of watered stock on which holders are looking for dividends.

About Profits

Then we sell these tires on a minimum margin. Every lessened cost means a lessened price.

To assure you of this, we advertise our profits. In times past they have run about 8½ per cent, and we do not expect to exceed that.

So it ought to be clear that no maker can give more than Goodyears give for the money.

Lower Prices

There will always be tires which will sell for less, and lesser tires which sell at equal prices. Tires may be made at even half our cost.

But the real cost is the cost per mile. And that is lowest in the highest grade of tire.

We spend on Goodyears every penny which can lessen cost per mile. One process alone, which others don't use, will cost us this year close to one million dollars.

Night and day, on a tire testing machine, we are constantly comparing one tire with another on a mileage basis.

On our department of research and experiment we spend $100,000 yearly—just to get more mileage.

Our materials are the costliest, our processes the most expensive known.

So we don't skimp Goodyear tires. We only make sure that you get more for each dollar than in any other tire that's made.

GOODYEAR
AKRON, OHIO

No-Rim-Cut Tires

With or Without Non-Skid Treads

Write for Goodyear Tire Book — 14th-year edition. It tells all known ways to economize on tires.

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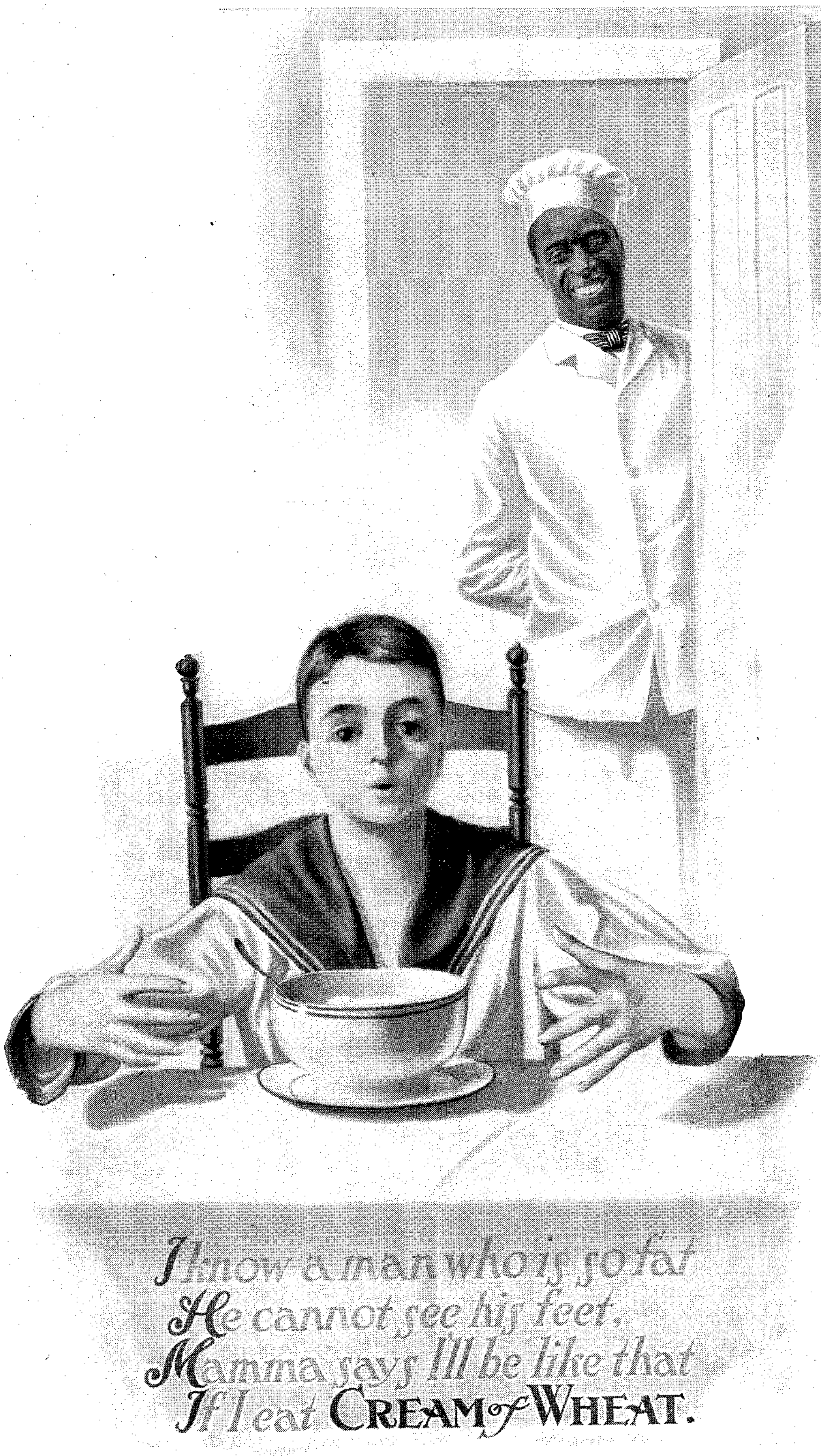
I know a man who is so fat
He cannot see his feet.
Mamma says I'll be like that
If I eat CREAM of WHEAT.

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